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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended to provide practical help to those local educational agencies, colleges, and institutes in Great Britain interested in developing educational programs for the unemployed. Section I is an introduction. Section II describes the conceptual framework, which includes five general areas: employability, coping, context, leisure, and opportunity creation. Each of these areas is expanded in terms of curricular aims, content, delivery, and resource. This section also discusses the conceptual, ethical, and political issues that are raised by the different options. Section III focuses on the management and implementation of curriculum development and looks not only at underlying principles and policies but also at a variety of practical issues related to the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs for the unemployed. It closes with a curriculum planning checklist intended to help those charged with planning such programs. Section IV provides general outlines of the five case studies of "good or interesting practice" that are discussed in detail at relevant points throughout the text. Appendixes include references to resources, including the provision that is possible through Manpower Services Commission funding. (YLB)

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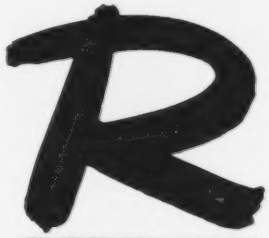

REPLAN is a programme to promote the development of education opportunities for the adult unemployed.

REPLAN aims to help those who provide education by identifying and publicising the most effective ways and means of meeting the educational needs of the unemployed, and by encouraging closer collaboration between the various providing agencies.

The programme is funded by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office; certain elements of the programme are also supported financially by the Manpower Services Commission. On behalf of REPLAN, the FEU and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) are managing complementary programmes of development and NIACE is employing and managing an advisory team of field officers led by a national co-ordinator.

Staff development programmes are being organised by NIACE in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Councils for further education, with participants drawn from a wide range of institutions and agencies in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Education Support Grants are being allocated to many local education authorities to strengthen the planning and co-ordination of provision for unemployed adults in their areas.

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FEU/REPLAN

PROJECT REPORT

ADULT UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE CURRICULUM:

A manual for practitioners

A. G. Watts and E. G. Knasel
National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling

Further Education Unit

REPLAN 4

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Examining Bodies,
Press and other interested
Institutions/Individuals.

Dear Sir/Madam,

ADULT UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE CURRICULUM

I have pleasure in enclosing the above document, commissioned by the FEU from NICEC and funded under the DES REPLAN programme. It is intended to be a manual for practitioners.

Unemployment is a significant social problem and there is evidence to indicate that it will remain so for the next decade. FHE colleges, as well as institutes of adult education who claim to relate to the needs of their local community, should by now regard this as a priority area. Many indeed have already done so, and five case-studies that are referred to throughout the document illustrate this.

This document, however, is more than a description of initiatives; it is meant to provide a conceptual framework for LEAs, colleges and institutes who wish to increase their support for adults who are unemployed. The FEU has felt for some time that such a framework is necessary, and the publication of this document, sensitively written by Tony Watts and Eddy Knasel, is one way of indicating that adults who are unemployed are as much of the clientele of the 'new FE' as voc-prep school leavers, YTS trainees and employed adults in PICKUP schemes. There is an understandable nervousness on behalf of many mainstream vocational teachers as to how they should relate to unemployed adult students. This document indicates that they have as much to offer as their adult education tutor colleagues.

The conceptual framework is described in section II of the document. Its basis comprises five general areas: employability; coping; context; leisure; and opportunity creation. Each of these areas is expanded in terms of curricular aims, content, delivery and resource. It is made clear that an individual's programme should be the subject of some negotiation; it is recognised that there are arguments against the adoption of such a framework ('helping people to learn how to cope with unemployment could be regarded as encouraging them to tolerate the intolerable'); and so negotiation is as necessary for the teachers as for the learners. Much will depend upon the attitudes held about work and the status of employment.

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Section III gives specific guidance with respect to curriculum design and its delivery, including the staff development implications. The appendices include reference to resources, including the provision that is possible through MSC funding.

A recurrent theme throughout the manual is diversity. The only objective characteristic shared by adults who are unemployed is that they do not have a job. Such is the nature of the challenge that this document poses to the further education system.

Yours faithfully,

Jack Mansell

JACK MANSELL
Chief Officer

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Tony Watts and Eddy Knasel
NICEC
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this manual is to help those involved in curriculum development related to the educational needs of the unemployed. The manual is aimed particularly at further education, but is also designed to be of use to others involved in such work and indeed to encourage collaboration across sectors. It draws upon five case-studies chosen to illustrate good or interesting practice in a wide range of educational settings (see Section IV) and on a variety of other surveys and case-studies published in the last few years (see Appendix A). Some of this evidence and experience is presented in boxes at appropriate places in the text. References are listed at the back of this manual and the appropriate numbers are shown in brackets within the text.
2. There is no way in which education can 'solve' the unemployment problem. It can, however, attempt to respond to the needs of the unemployed. To some degree, it can provide unemployed people with a structure and a sense of purpose. It can also help them to acquire new skills and knowledge. In these ways, it can help them:
   - to **cope** better with their existing situation;

     and/or
   - to **escape** unemployment and return to employment;

     and/or
   - to use their situation as an **opportunity** to explore new possibilities.

Unemployment and the Unemployed

3. Any attempts to respond to the educational needs of the unemployed have to recognise that, in terms of **range**, they are an extremely diverse group. Indeed, they share only one objective characteristic — the fact that they do not have a job. In other respects they are as diverse as the whole adult population in terms of their abilities, interests, needs, etc. In terms of **balance**, however, they include disproportionate numbers of people from relatively deprived groups — the young, the old, women, ethnic minorities, the handicapped, the unskilled, and those with personal and social problems — and disproportionate numbers of people whose previous experiences of education have been unsatisfactory.
4. The learning needs of the unemployed will not necessarily be related to the fact of their unemployment. Their needs may stem from other problems they have, or other interests and opportunities they want to explore. This manual, however, pays particular attention to how the specific needs of unemployed people can be attended to in the provision made available to them.
5. Almost all unemployed people experience some negative effects from being unemployed. Research at the University of Sheffield (29) suggests nine such effects in particular:
   (a) **Reduced income.** Among unemployed working-class men, about two-thirds have a household income which is half or less than their income when employed. Financial anxiety tends to be high, and to be an important source of distress.

   (b) **Reduced variety of activities**. Unemployed people are required to leave their home less often, and their reduced income means that they have less money to go to clubs, pubs, sporting events, the cinema, etc. More time is spent in household tasks and in sleeping, sitting around and watching television.

   (c) **Fewer goals and less 'traction'**. Employment often not only offers goals in itself but commits one to other goals and tasks: one becomes drawn along by the structure of one's work. Unemployed people feel the lack of such goals.

   (d) **Reduced scope for decision-making** Unemployed people may experience greater freedom of choice in relation to small repetitive decisions about daily routine, but in respect of large decisions — for example, about life-style or leisure activities — the range of realistic options available to them is usually severely curtailed by lack of material resources (and, often, psychological resources too).

   (e) **Reduced scope for development and practice of skills**. The diminished resources and the reduction in externally-imposed goals are likely, for most people, to lead to more limited use or development of skills during unemployment.

   (f) **Increased exposure to psychologically threatening experiences**. Unemployed people are committed to seeking jobs where they will often be rejected; they have to deal with a society which often appears to view them as second-class citizens; they have to struggle to raise money through borrowing and selling; and they often experience difficulties and humiliation in securing the benefits and allowances to which they are entitled.

(g) **Increased insecurity about the future**. Many unemployed people identify as a major problem not knowing what is going to happen to them in future months. In particular, they are threatened by the possibility that they might become unemployable, lose their self-respect, or have insoluble money problems.

(h) **Restricted interpersonal contact**. Unemployed people tend to reduce the range of other people with whom they have contact, and to confine their social contacts within a much more restricted circle.

(i) **Reduced social status**. On becoming unemployed, a person loses a socially accepted position and the roles and self-respect which it provides. They tend to feel that they have moved into a position of lower prestige.

6. Most of these effects can be linked to the way in which the absence of employment undermines the six main functions which employment performs in our society (18) :

- Providing income.
- Imposing a time structure on the working day.
- Involving regularly shared experiences and contacts with people outside the nuclear family.
- Linking the individual to goals and structures which transcend his or her own.
- Defining aspects of personal status and identity.
- Enforcing activity.

What Education Can Do

7. Insofar as it increases the chances of return to employment, education can accelerate the restoration of these functions. Many unemployed people will indeed judge its value and effectiveness in terms of whether it leads to a job. In more immediate terms, however, education can itself fulfil some of the functions. It cannot do very much about the first and probably the most basic one of providing income (though it can help the unemployed claim the full benefits and allowances due to them, to earn some extra money on the side, and to learn how to live within a limited budget — see Section II). It can however provide:

- A time structure for the working day.
- Regularly shared experiences and contacts with people outside the nuclear family.
- Links to wider goals and structures.
- A new status and identity (that of 'learner') which, while it may not be seen as a full substitute of that of 'worker', may nonetheless be preferable to the essentially negative status of 'unemployed'.
- A stimulus to activity.

> 'An important effect of what we do is to give back to unemployed people the concept of 'leisure': because they study in the day, they again have 'free time' in the evenings and at week-ends, as they had at work' (tutor, Case-Study A).

8. To some extent, therefore, education can provide a **substitute** for employment. It can also lead unemployed people to develop other substitutes. These may be non-economic: voluntary and community work, and leisure activities of various kinds. Or they may involve skills which provide some additional income, and/or can lead in due course towards being able to create their own livelihood through self-employment or setting up a small business or co-operative. More generally, education can help unemployed people to move out of the isolation which often accompanies unemployment, and to be more fully integrated into the community.

9. At times, the lines between educational provision and other forms of community work designed to respond to the needs of the unemployed may become rather blurred. This is the case, for example, where such provision starts with the notion of offering support, and leaves 'learning goals' to be developed at the learner's own pace.

> In Case-Study E, 'Skill Swop' is basically a drop-in centre. Although some informal skill-exchanges have occurred, and although a few users have gone on to take adult-education courses, they are placed under no pressure to do so, and most simply use it as a social base. Again, the Bideford Bakehouse project is designed to develop a new resource for those unemployed who are interested in becoming self-employed, with learning goals built in but of secondary importance.

Such links between community-development activities and more formal 'educational' provision can be very creative, and may significantly increase the scope of what the educational system as a whole can offer as a response to unemployment.

10. In the end, however, unemployment remains a problem which requires economic and political solutions. This provides some of those who work with the unemployed with considerable dilemmas and anxieties of conscience. Is the effect of all their energies simply to help the unemployed to tolerate the intolerable? Does it simply patch up the wounds, without offering any cures? Indeed, by patching the wounds up, does it reduce the pressure on society as a whole to look for cures? These questions, and some possible responses to them, will be discussed further towards the end of Section II.

Challenges to Existing Practice

11. At present, the potential of education as a source of help to the unemployed is largely untapped. The proportion of unemployed people involved in formal educational activities is unknown, but is probably under 5%. If this figure is to be significantly increased, much more sustained and imaginative efforts from educational providers are needed.
12. Responding to the needs of the unemployed challenges existing educational provision in a number of fundamental ways. Amongst these, a basic question concerns the extent to which these needs can be met by finding ways of 'in-filling' unemployed people into existing provision, and the extent to which new special provision is needed. The needs of some unemployed people may be met by existing provision so long as appropriate arrangements can be made in terms of time, place, fees, transport, creche and child-care provision, etc. Others, however, may require new kinds of provision especially targeted to their requirements.
13. In particular, the evidence from existing practice is that many unemployed people welcome a structure which enables them to get together with other people in the same situation as themselves, gradually to build their confidence, and to work out what their learning needs are and how they can best be met. These needs may then be met within the group, or through 'in-fill' into courses open to other students. In the latter case, there may still be a need for some special support to take account of their distinctive problems.
14. In a sense, therefore, what is often needed within educational institutions is a kind of 'base' provision for the unemployed which relates to their specific needs. It should, however, take account of three issues which stem from the negative nature of the term 'unemployed'. The first is that some unemployed people may be reluctant to identify themselves with provision which is 'labelled' too clearly: this has implications for marketing and publicity (see Section III, paras. 73-76). The second is that there is a danger that the base can become a kind of ghetto cut off from outside contact and making reintegration more difficult: this has implications for the relationship between the base and other parts of the institution (see Section III, paras. 112-114). The third is that there is a continuing tension between the need to provide a supportive base but to encourage people to leave it: this has implications for progression (see Section III, paras. 102-103), and also means that there is a strong case for a constant 'roll-on/roll-off' flexibility.

> 'You need to be much more aware of things like people don't sign on for classes for the unemployed having decided they've got three months to play with. Unless you're totally resigned to unemployment, you always hope that maybe you'll get a job tomorrow and stop being unemployed. So working with them you must not assume a long-term commitment' (curriculum co-ordinator, Case-Study B).

15. It will be evident that providing for the needs of the unemployed makes demands which are often quite distinct from those that have characterised traditional FE. On the other hand, there is some congruence between these demands and those made by other groups to which many parts of the FE system have already responded — YTS trainees, women 'returners', etc. As with these groups, the organisational implications of providing effectively for the unemployed are potentially considerable.

> '. . . Other institutions are becoming aware that the teenage population is dwindling whereas the adult population is mushrooming. Therefore, future markets will lie with adults. What they really want to do is get in on the act, but what they don't like is the implications this has for curriculum change' (principal, Case-Study B).

In broad terms, there seem to be four main alternatives for FE institutions:

(a) To base their provision on courses and programmes which they can offer within their existing structure and tradition — vocational courses, etc.

(b) To provide such courses, but to supplement them with 'access' provision based on more learner-centred approaches. Such provision may be marginal within the institution but can be seen as aiding recruitment — in effect, it becomes a sophisticated extension of 'marketing'.

(c) To make separate provision for the adult unemployed on more of an 'ongoing' basis, recognising and accepting that it is likely to remain fairly marginal to the institution as a whole.

(d) To attempt to alter the structure of the institution in a more basic and thorough way so as to make it fully accessible and responsive to the unemployed (and to other groups too).

16. Whatever approach is taken, the basic assumption of this manual is that the educational system as a whole, and the FE system in particular, can have an important role in providing for the needs of unemployed people. It seems probable that historically high levels of unemployment will be a feature of the British economy for the foreseeable future. This presents our society with some of the most important problems and challenges that it currently faces. Although education cannot, on its own, solve these problems, it has a significant part to play if the challenges are to be met in a constructive and creative way. If our society is to remain one worth living in, education cannot afford to ignore these challenges.

17. The purpose of this manual is to provide practical help to those interested in developing educational programmes for the unemployed. To this end:

- Section II comprises a discussion of possible curriculum content. It presents a framework for planning the objectives of any educational initiative for the unemployed. It also discusses the conceptual, ethical and political issues which are raised by the different options.
- Section III focuses on the management and implementation of curriculum development, looking not only at underlying principles and policies, but also at a variety of practical issues related to the design, implementation and evaluation of programmes for the unemployed. It closes with a Curriculum Planning Check-List intended to help those charged with planning such programmes.

Sections II and III are complementary to one another: some readers may prefer to read them sequentially; some may prefer to read them in reverse order. The manual closes with Section IV, which provides general outlines of the five case-studies of 'good or interesting practice' that are discussed in detail at relevant points throughout the text.

II. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Five Possible Objectives

18. The purpose of this section is to present a conceptual framework for the **aims** and **content** of educational provision for unemployed people. Section III argues that such content should be negotiated between teachers and learners. This framework — which has been adapted from earlier work (30) — may provide a useful basis for such negotiation.

19. There are five main objectives which educational provision for the adult unemployed might pursue:

    (1) **Employability**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will increase their chances of finding and keeping a job.

        (a) Basic skills (oracy, literacy, numeracy) required for employability.

        (b) Awareness of areas of employment not previously considered.

        (c) Occupational knowledge, skills and attitudes required for particular areas of employment.

        (d) Job-search and job-acquisition skills.

        (e) Job-retention skills.

        (f) Knowledge, skills and attitudes for foreseeing forces which may affect prospects in different areas of employment

    (2) **Coping**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to cope with being unemployed.

        (a) Knowledge of welfare rights (unemployment benefits, redundancy rights, housing benefits, etc.) and skills of claiming such rights.

        (b) Knowledge, skills and attitudes for handling a limited budget while maintaining health and a balanced diet.

        (c) 'Do-it-yourself' skills.

        (d) Awareness of local possibilities for informal-economy activities.

        (e) Awareness of psychological effects of being unemployed (including effects of social pressures, effects on family relationships, etc.) and skills for coping with them.

        (f) Knowledge of support services and sources of help in the community.

    (3) **Context**: to help unemployed people to understand the extent to which the responsibility for being unemployed lies with society rather than with the individual, and to explore possible forms of social, political and community action related to unemployment.

        (a) Awareness of possible economic, political and social causes of unemployment, and possible responses to it.

        (b) Skills for engaging in social, political and community action related to unemployment.

    (4) **Leisure**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to make good use of their increased 'leisure' time.

        (a) Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to existing or new interests (e.g. hobbies).

        (b) Awareness of local possibilities for voluntary community work, skill exchanges, etc.

        (c) Awareness of educational opportunities, and knowledge and skills for obtaining access to them.

        (d) Skills of managing use of own time.

    (5) **Opportunity creation**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will enable them to create their own livelihood.

        (a) Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to becoming self-employed or setting up a small business/co-operative.

        (b) Awareness of alternative, self-sustaining life-styles.

    Each will now be examined in more detail.

20. (1) **Employability**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will increase their chances of finding and keeping a job.

(a) Basic skills (oracy, literacy, numeracy) required for employability.

'It is a tacit assumption that basic education will increase employability' (22, p.24). Much adult basic education provision has come increasingly to cater for the needs of the unemployed:

> 'The general impression is that at least three quarters of all participants in adult basic education in some inner city areas were unemployed' (9, pp.97-98).

This is true, too, of much 'English as a second language' provision.

Other programmes often include attention to literacy, numeracy, etc. as a subordinate but important part of what they are trying to do:

> 'We don't actually engage in adult basic education as such — or if we do, then it's very heavily integrated into what we do — but there are a range of numerical skills, oral skills and writing skills, literacy skills, that people exercise when they are here and that are often quite explicitly drawn out as part of the programme' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

(b) Awareness of areas of employment not previously considered.

The 'New Skills Courses' in Coventry (Case-Study A) have been designed to provide 'tasters' for unemployed people interested in exploring new areas of employment. Following a one-week induction, groups of 13 students have spent four weeks at each of the three FE colleges in Coventry: areas covered have included retailing, floristry, motor-vehicle servicing, building and construction, and leisure and recreation-related jobs (e.g. groundsmanship). There has then been a final one-week review and assessment.

A programme set up at Consett Technical College to provide for redundant ex-steelworkers included a series of practical workshops (brickwork, mechanical engineering, woodwork, motor vehicle, welding, computing, electrical installation) designed as 'tasters' to help students to decide upon those occupations for which they would wish to seek further specific training. A minority of students took advantage of this provision (17, p.121).

(c) Occupational knowledge, skills and attitudes required for particular areas of employment.

A considerable body of such provision may be found in FE colleges — including those where arrangements have been made to ease the access of unemployed people to existing vocationally relevant courses on an 'in-fill' basis. This provision is important, for instance, in relation to the redeployment of skilled workers whose skills have become redundant. Care has to be taken, however, to ensure that the new skills and knowledge are related to real needs in the labour market. In Case-Study A, provision has included:

- A course to train medical secretaries.
- A business skills course to update the unemployed in modern office technology.
- An Adult Preparation Training programme — funded through the MSC's Adult Training Strategy — which is based on a modular approach. It includes possible options on skill areas such as new technology and floristry, and also options whereby unemployed people may choose to enter an existing vocationally-specific course on an 'in-fill' basis.

Although some such initiatives are financed through other means, MSC-funded provision relevant to the unemployment (see Appendix B) tends to focus particularly on this objective. Many vocational courses are also offered through MSC skillcentres, the main function of which has been to offer vocational training for the unemployed.

(d) Job-search and job-acquisition skills.

'There are also 'job-seekers' courses specifically designed to help people to become employed. These ... are often short, intensive courses, concentrated into a week or less. The aim is to stimulate students to become more confident and take initiatives. Students are helped to look for jobs and to assess their own capabilities in relation to the job market. There are exercises in telephone enquiries, writing letters of application and interview techniques. These courses attract students from a wide range of backgrounds, including graduates, who are often said to have little idea about how to apply for jobs. Providers of these courses drew attention to their policy of siting them in areas where 'job-seeking' might have some chance of success and avoiding areas where the rate of employment was high' (22, p.24).

The 'Bridge' programme at the East Midlands Regional Management Centre (Case-Study D) has been more elaborate. It has covered a six-month period and has included:

- A five-day course: three days on self-assessment and preparation of *curricula vitae*; and then (after a seven/ten-day gap to allow participants to prepare their CVs) two days on interviewing skills.
- Up to five hours' counselling.
- Optional use of closed-circuit TV to practise interview skills.
- Optional seminars/workshops/films.
- A common room stacked with papers and journals containing job vacancies.
- Secretarial help to type letters of application and CVs.
- Progress workshops in which participants review their job-search progress with a tutor and with each other.

(e) Job-retention skills.

The East Midlands RMC 'Bridge' programme (Case-Study D) has included efforts to:

'. . .bolster any weakness they might have so that they won't be found lacking by an employer when they've got a job' (course tutor).

Much provision for the unemployed can be viewed as being concerned, explicitly or implicitly, with instilling/sustaining/restoring skills and work habits which will enable them to hold down jobs.

(f) Knowledge, skills and attitudes for foreseeing forces which may affect prospects in different areas of employment.

One of the tutors in the East Midlands RMC 'Bridge' programme (Case-Study D) has covered labour-market trends:

'He does a lot on the total picture in the UK. Fields where companies are expanding, and other fields where work is contracting. Trying to gear them to look at industries which are expanding rather than those which are contracting. He paints a picture of the UK as it is and how it may progress in the next five years or so' (course tutor).

21. **(2) Coping**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to cope with being unemployed.

(a) Knowledge of welfare rights (unemployment benefits, redundancy rights, housing benefits, etc. and skills of claiming such rights.

In a project in Leeds and Bradford involving 62 courses for the unemployed, more than one-quarter were on 'Know Your Rights'. As a review of the project commented, 'Most of the unemployed are working-class living in absolute or relative poverty and dependent on state-benefits: any educational providers then, must be aware of the implications of this' (27, pp.82-83).

A review of Workers Educational Association provision for unemployed adults commented:

> 'It is evident that many with no income other than social security and other welfare benefits are puzzled by the official regulations and processes inherent in the administration of the social services. It appears that those who are not well placed to explain themselves and formulate questions find it hard to understand all they are told across the counter by hard pressed officials who may not appear sympathetic. To help such people to understand entitlements and the rules governing them, courses have been organised, often in centres for the unemployed. The syllabuses usually include some background to the establishment of the welfare state, but focus mainly on achieving a practical understanding of a wide variety of social security entitlements related to unemployment, sickness, invalidity, parents, the bereaved, and supplementary benefits, including housing. In many cases, although courses are open to all, those who attend are often engaged in giving advice to individuals with personal problems. This work has become a part of most centres for the unemployed as well as of other voluntary agencies and it seems that there is much to be done by all concerned' (16, p.6).

Most such courses contain a strong informational component Some also include role-play etc. to build up claimant skills and confidence.

(b) Knowledge, skills and attitudes for handling a limited budget while maintaining health and a balanced diet.

'A number of providers drew attention to the concerns felt by women about problems of health, diet and budgeting on a reduced income, and attempted to provide courses and classes to meet these needs' (22, p.25).

The courses include such titles as 'Body and Mind' (19, ch.12), 'How to Eat on a Low Income' (28, p.14), and 'Staying Healthy on the Dole — Naturally' (28, p.21). Also, 'fitness classes of different kinds already figure largely in adult education programmes' (3, p.10).

A tutor on a course for redundant workers commented:

> 'We could also have had course elements relating to money management, investment management, an area which is obviously quite important to people if they are going to be living partly on investment income. It is as important as welfare rights' (17, p.116).

(c) 'Do-it-yourself ' skills.

'"DIY" appears to be popular. This was provided with a greater or lesser degree of formality, sometimes in courses, sometimes in one-day sessions, sometimes in a more casual drop-in style. Home repairs, electrical repairs, home decorating and joinery or carpentry were covered. Some centres provided courses for women in basic repair skills. Car maintenance was popular, and motor-bicycle maintenance was provided for younger men' (22, p.25).

(d) Awareness of local possibilities for informal-economy activities.

'There have been a variety of classes aimed at supporting the informal or mutual-aid economy (in driving, car maintenance, metalwork, dress studies and food studies)' (6, p.26).

Some courses focusing on self-employment (see Objective 5a below) include attention to informal-economy activities:

> 'One of the things we were trying to promote in the course was the idea that working unofficially — working in the unofficial economy, continuing as a housewife for benefit purposes but building up a track record without the huge responsibility of overheads, and work in a business that you might actually decide at the end of the day was not what you were interested in — was a better way of going forward. People on the course were very enthusiastic about that' (course organiser, Case-Study B).

Some informal-economy activities are legal; some shade into the 'black' economy. Preparation for the latter can remain a 'hidden curriculum' : the evaluation of the Consett Technical College programme noted in relation to workshop activities that 'a few have plans to work in the 'black economy' ' (17, p.122). But such issues can also be brought out into the open:

> 'I do talk about the black economy. Not in any evaluative way, but simply to place on record the fact that there is a large black economy in the Dearne which has certain specific consequences, and certain specific causes. But it's really a way of opening people up to discussion about it themselves, and then to find out what they think of it and so on' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

(e) Awareness of psychological effects of being unemployed (including effects of social pressures, effects on family relationships, etc.) and skills for coping with them.

Group activities and group relationships can be especially valuable in this respect. A review of provision for unemployed adults drew attention 'to the isolation of unemployed people and to the therapeutic effects of belonging to a group, which shares the experience of unemployment and in which members provide mutual support. The assertion that the class has 'saved my life' was made more than once' (22, p.36).

(f) Knowledge of support services and sources of help in the community.

'Sources of help' is part of the life-skills component of basic education (3, p.9). Educational provision for unemployed people can include visits to or from such services (social services, voluntary groups, centres for the unemployed, etc.); they can also be actively planned in conjunction with such services.

22. **(3) Context**: to help unemployed people to understand the extent to which the responsibility for being unemployed lies with society rather than with the individual, and to explore forms of social, political and community action related to unemployment.

(a) Awareness of possible economic, political and social causes of unemployment, and possible responses to it.

'Opportunities to learn more about the historical, social and economic background to the present circumstances are of course provided in the general public programme of the university adult education department and the WEA. Some of this conventional work has been extended to meet specific requests for unemployed groups, who have themselves also organised short courses or single events with contributors provided by adult education bodies. One university adult education department with a strong tradition in day-release courses for trades unionists has now extended this programme to unemployed workers on the basis that they, like those who are employed, need to understand their position and the ways of responding to it' (3, p.15).

An HMI report on WEA provision found that 'courses concerned with the nature of unemployment and the economy which had been provided in earlier years are now few in number' (16, p.4). The 'politics of unemployment' was given relatively low priority in a survey in Derry (23, pp.335, 336).

It may be, however, that **some** attention to such issues can be fruitfully integrated into other provision, instead of being treated separately. The AACE state that, in offering guidance and counselling to unemployed people, adult education 'should quite clearly begin such counselling by rejecting the frequently held view that unemployment is the personal problem or fault of the individual without a job. The social, political and economic causes of unemployment must be clearly stated' (4, p.24).

(b) Skills for engaging in social, political and community action related to unemployment.

Some independent groups linked with adult education centres have become 'active in drawing attention to the problems of the unemployed, persuading Trade Unions, local authorities and other agencies to give more positive support' (22, p.28).

Some centres for the unemployed have become engaged in limited forms of political campaigning:

> 'If these centres are to do more than merely help unemployed workers cope with unemployment, their potential as campaigning bases, as settings within which organised opposition to the economic and social policies responsible for the hardships of unemployment can take shape, must be developed' (13, p.6).

There have been difficulties here in relation to centres staffed by Manpower Services Commission funding, because the MSC tends to prohibit such activities, at least on the part of the funded staff. Nonetheless, a survey by Labour Research revealed a considerable amount of campaign activity on a range of issues (21, p.48).

Northern College (Case-Study C) includes a 'Community Activists Course' and a course on 'Organising Your Community Group':

> 'People raise for themselves questions about how they influence decision or policy makers and we help them with that. **What** they decide to take up, and precisely **how** they decide to take it up, is clearly not for us to say. In a sense what we're doing is to enfranchise people to engage in the democratic process — to learn to approach the press, for instance — to become full citizens. That seems to me to be particularly important for the unemployed — one of the things that happens when you lose your job is that you do feel less than a full citizen' (short-course organiser).

23. **(4) Leisure**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will help them to make good use of their increased 'leisure' time.

(a) Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to existing or new interests (e.g. hobbies).

There is sometimes some opposition to 'leisure' and 'hobbies' provision for the unemployed:

> 'I don't like the word 'hobbies'. I think there's a sort of suspicion about dwelling on hobbies, and leisure time. You know — 'It'll go all right being unemployed if only you take up marquetry'' (head of community education, Case-Study A).
>
> 'Our message is — forget the leisure, get stuck into the job-finding' (course tutor, Case-Study D).

Nonetheless, hobbies and leisure pursuits have been given reasonably high ratings in needs surveys of the unemployed (12, p.24; 19, p.335).

Some adult education centres offer support and encouragement in creative arts and crafts: writing, painting, drama, music, dancing, photography, woodwork, etc. (see e.g. 19, chs. 6-8). FE 'vocational' resources can fruitfully be reviewed to see whether they can be adapted for such 'leisure' uses. An ACACE report saw these kinds of creative activities as providing an important step towards self-realisation:

> 'The needs of unemployed men and women are more acute than those of other people; and they have the time. They require workshops and rehearsal rooms, tools and materials, places for performance, reprographic and video equipment, the means of publishing and displaying their creations, and above all the leadership of people who can impart professional standards of effort and achievement' (3, p.8.).

Sports activities can be of value to the unemployed. A fair number of local authorities offer concessionary rates to them for using leisure centres etc.; some have set up more sophisticated schemes involving the use of sports leaders or motivators to work with the unemployed and encourage them to take part in sport (14, p.295). Southwark Institute of Adult Education (Case-Study B) has accordingly set up a Pre-Vocational Course for Sports Leaders, itself designed mainly for unemployed people.

Much sports provision is provided by adult education, sometimes in collaboration with leisure and recreation services:

> 'The educational value of physical activity lies in discovering personal potential and personal limits... For the unemployed, with time to fill, it is reasonable to expect that there should be opportunities to play games for recreation; but that alone is not enough. More positive benefit comes from reaching for the limits of individual skill performance, and this means work under a coach or trainer. Nor is it only for the young. There is much evidence of the confidence and self-regard that can be had at any age from skilled physical education' (3, p.9).

(b) Awareness of local possibilities for voluntary community work, skill exchanges, etc.

Some unemployed groups have become involved in voluntary work in the community. Such activities offer 'opportunities for self dignity by aiding the even less fortunate' (9, p.41).

There have also been some volunteer action training courses for unemployed people. One, in Swindon, has included a three-day induction period, followed by a 'developmental' stage for 1½ days a week, and an 8-week placement (also 1½ days a week) with a voluntary or statutory agency (9, pp.105-110).

A number of skill-exchange schemes have been set up, with varying degrees of formality (24). In the Cwmbran Skill Swop, registers of offers and requirements were kept, and — with the help of the community college and other centres — a variety of groups and social activities were set up alongside individual work. Care was taken to clear the scheme with the DHSS, but difficulties were eventually experienced from the local Council (6, pp.29-33).

The Bideford Bakehouse project (Case-Study E) originated in part from a Skill Swop initiative. In practice, the initiative never developed a formal skill-exchange function, but instead took the form of a coffee-bar drop-in centre, in which some skills were exchanged on an informal basis.

(c) Awareness of educational opportunities, and knowledge and skills for obtaining access to them.

A programme of courses for the unemployed in Leeds and Bradford included 'new opportunities' courses:

> 'Individuals often want to know what opportunities and possibilities are open to them. It has proved useful to discuss these possible options in groups as well as to provide some individual educational counselling because the group context can, as in all other courses, build up an individual's self-confidence... These sessions have examined possibilities for entry into full or part-time educational courses where people are interested in gaining qualifications or aiming for a 'career'; other options and possible interests of the group can be examined, whether this be education for leisure or interest, education about community or political activity, or a critical examination of 'training' possibilities, whether through skills-centres or MSC programmes' (27, p.77).

A wide variety of 'access' courses, 'bridging' courses and 'second-chance' courses have been set up in recent years to provide a bridge to mainstream educational provision for adults. Many such courses have been designed to meet the needs of special groups — notably women and ethnic minorities — but some have been adapted to cater for the needs of the unemployed. An important part of their function is to encourage the uncertain and unconfident to enter the education system and benefit from it, and to develop their confidence in learning.

Such courses vary a great deal in content and style. 'Some may follow a course of study with a negotiated curriculum over a finite period of time. Others may be less formally structured and encompass a wider spectrum of ability, though the concept of student choice remains central' (22, p.21).

Case-Study A, for example, has offered a one-year Open-Access Course which Lanchester Polytechnic and Warwick University have accepted as a route into degree courses Many participants have appeared to use it as an 'escape route' from unemployment and also from the kinds of jobs they had previously held. They have often been highly motivated and during the year have derived a lot of their identity from the course:

> 'I've been very surprised at the speedy take-up of new skills, new ideas. When we've selected the right people they leap forward. They're very teachable people... They get almost neurotically committed to the course... I get the feeling it's like a new world for them and they want to absorb as much of it as they can' (tutor).

(c) Skills of managing use of own time.

Some programmes examine time management as part of their ongoing counselling provision. In Case-Study C, some more formal provision has been made:

> 'One of the interesting things we do with the 'Understanding Unemployment' course is to get them to keep a diary: not just to get them to suggest how they might arrange their own time, but to get them thinking in a systematic way about how they spend it at the moment' (short-course organiser).

24. **(5) Opportunity creation**: to help unemployed people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will enable them to create their own livelihood.

(a) Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to becoming self-employed or setting up a small business/co-operative.

The MSC funds a variety of 'training for enterprise' courses — many of them in FE colleges and polytechnics — designed to help those who are interested in setting up small businesses or in becoming self-employed. Such courses often include evaluation of business ideas, and help with marketing, budgeting, financial control, etc. Sometimes ongoing support is offered to students after they have completed the course.

Clearly self-employment is only likely to be a solution for a small proportion of the unemployed: one survey of unemployed people in Wolverhampton found that 13% had considered becoming self-employed and 8% had tried to find advice on it (20, p.29).

Some areas of the country have reported resistance to such courses. A programme in Lothian ran several sessions on 'Running a Small Business', but at no stage did unemployed students show much interest, and it was eventually dropped (19, p.162). In other areas, however, the programmes have attracted an enthusiastic response.

A project at Accrington and Rossendale College was designed to provide the opportunity for a group of mature unemployed people to get together to learn/develop skills which would enable them, as a group, to set up a co-operative. Members were 'in-filled' into existing classes in appropriate practical skills. This made it difficult to establish a group identity, and although some steps were eventually taken to try to remedy this, no operating co-operative resulted. Some of the group did however set up in business on their own in shared premises (1).

Case-Study B has included a 'Sunrise' course, which has been an 'English as a second language' initiative seeking to help unwaged individuals from ethnic minorities to look at the skills involved in setting up small businesses (especially co-operatives) or entering self-employment. Efforts have been made to explore some of the skills that are needed and to explore the idea of co-operatives through experiments in co-operative working:

> 'Last year one thing we did was to run an exotic food stall at the institute Open Day, and another we were given a specific budget by somebody running a coach trip to provide a tea. That was where the crunch came. It divided the students between those who thought the idea of a co-operative was fantastic and those who never wanted to hear the word again. It made it real for them' (course organiser).

The aim of the Bideford Bakehouse (Case-Study E) has been to convert an old bakehouse so as to provide a physical base from which unemployed people can be encouraged to explore the possibility of self-employment. Support is to include:

- Access to tools beyond the capital resources of an unemployed person.
- Access to advice and support on the 'skills' involved in setting up and running one's own business.
- Access to specific skills training — perhaps on occasion on a skills-exchange basis.
- Access to a financial structure designed legally to circumvent the 'benefits trap' facing someone making the move from unemployed to self-employment.

(b) Awareness of alternative, self-sustaining life-styles.

The notion of 'coping' (Objective 2), and particularly the emphasis on 'do-it-yourself', self-provisioning, and informal-economy activities, could be extended into the notion of self-sustenance.

25. Presenting the options in this way should not obscure the possible connections and overlaps between them. Common to all of them can be the notion of developing the individual's self-awareness and self-confidence. This can be achieved alongside and through any of the five objectives, given appropriate teaching and learning methods (see paras. 42 and 80-85).
26. Moreover, some provision will cross-cut the different options. For example, basic skills — which are listed in the model in relation to increasing employability (Objective 1a) — are also helpful in relation to claiming welfare rights (Objective 2a), handling a limited budget (Objective 2b), and indeed many of the other objectives. Again, one objective may be taught **through** another: for instance, basic skills are often taught within the context of practical skills, whether vocational or non-vocational.

The 'Return to Learning through Fashion' course at Southwark (Case-Study B) has combined a number of elements. It has attracted women, almost all of them from ethnic minorities. An important part of the course has been its 'study skills' component:

> 'We could just have run a study skills course, but that would not have attracted the women who traditionally go to dress-making classes... What I think is not recognised outside and why we've used this particular subject... is that it is an excellent means for teaching numeracy, English, mathematics, spelling, all of those things. The skills involved in pattern-cutting are highly complex academic skills. That was my reasoning to get some recognition for the area of work' (course organiser).

The course has also covered problem-solving and has even touched on social history and political education. At the same time, the course organiser believes that an important objective of the course is to preserve the skills of dress-making — which she believes can be fulfilling ones in their own right as well as helping to save money on buying clothes. She also sees the skills as being ones which can help unemployed people to at least supplement their income:

> 'You're giving people the opportunity to do something which is worthwhile in its own right, with the possibility of selling the product that they've made... Many of our students here sell their work — I organise sales for them. We have a woman who's now selling crochet work to Liberty's. It wouldn't have occurred to her that it was possible to do that before she came here... I'm not suggesting that people can go out of here and be great designers and make fortunes selling dresses costing thousands of pounds. But it is not difficult to make enough, not necessarily to earn a living, but to make money that can make a difference to an unemployed person's life.'

27. It may also at times be difficult to define the **destinations** of particular skills: whether they are being developed for employability (Objective 1), for coping (Objective 2), for leisure (Objective 4), or for opportunity creation (Objective 5). The unemployed themselves do not always distinguish between these: indeed, the uncertainties facing unemployed people may make it very difficult for them to identify clear goals in such terms. It may accordingly be tempting to blur such issues, particularly in situations where students want jobs but tutors do not think they are likely to get them. It is however important that providers be clear about their objectives, and that these be openly negotiated with learners, with funding bodies, etc. This can avoid the disappointment and mutual blame which might otherwise ensue during and at the end of the programme.

In a programme for redundant steelworkers set up at Consett Technical College, very different views about the aims of the programme were held by the different partners involved:

- The **British Steel Corporation** regarded it as training for future employment, and even disapproved of provision for GCE 'O' levels.
- The **college principal** felt that the curriculum should have a socio-economic orientation: he saw the development of welfare rights education, for example, as one means of encouraging people to take more control in shaping their lives, and thereby as 'a strategy for establishing provision more widely in the local community'.
- The **tutors** were unwilling to subscribe to the notion that the course would lead to opportunities for employment, and therefore sought to introduce and broaden leisure interests for the students.
- Most **students** were motivated by a desire to improve their general education, to acquire skills relevant to futher training and employment, and to increase their income from make-up pay.

'Time and flexibility to negotiate some reconciliation of these aims was not available — in fact the curriculum was developed in an atmosphere of varying degrees of mistrust and hostility between the various participants'. The problems were exacerbated by the friction that surrounded the closure of the steel works: 'although cool reflection and detailed planning may be the best way to proceed in setting up new courses, this was not the framework in Consett, nor is it likely to be in other areas facing major closures and redundancies' (17, pp.viii, 22).

Moreover, if the same provision is designed **both** to enhance employability **and** for coping/leisure/-opportunity-creation — as it quite legitimately may — these multiple objectives need to be reflected in the curricular design: there is no point, for example, focusing exclusively on skills which cannot be used outside places of employment; and there is at least some need to attend to the distinctive problems that will be faced in developing the skills as a basis for self-employment etc.

Making the Choices

28. In the end, the choices that are made between the different possible objectives will depend on a number of factors. One of these is the policy and tradition of the institution. Any institution or initiative which tries to provide education for unemployed people brings with it its own values and principles. These reflect the understood role and function of the institution — including any statutory responsibilities, the policies of any bodies to which the institution is responsible (e.g. local government committees, boards of governors), and the institution's own management policies. They also reflect the educational philosophies of the staff who manage and implement provision.
29. What the institution ultimately provides will also reflect the ways in which it resolves certain questions of principle which have to do specifically with unemployment and the unemployed. In broad terms, it is possible to identify three different aims relating to the potential value of education to unemployed people as individuals. These are:
    - That education should help individuals to **cope** with unemployment. The underlying belief here is that education needs to recognise that unemployment may at times be an inescapable condition for the individual and that help should be given in surviving it.

> 'The need was so apparent. Here was a group of people faced with a problem never before experienced in this city. The Education Service and the City Council needed to respond. The social problems which have been experienced — in terms of things like the break-up of families and so on — have been immense. As an FE service we felt we should do what we could.
>
> 'We make it quite clear we can't provide jobs. We try to say: 'You're not on the scrap-heap. You have got some marketable skills, although they may need updating'. Having reached them with this message, if they still don't get jobs they begin to realise there is education, there is keeping one's mind active, there are other activities one can usefully be engaged in that are far better than sitting at home and watching the telly all day' (college principal, Case-Study A).

- That education should help individuals to **escape** unemployment, by returning to employment as quickly as possible. Here the underlying belief is that unemployment is an intrinsically undesirable condition and that individuals who try hard enough to escape it can do so: accordingly, it is the job of education to return learners to employment with the minimum of delay.

> 'When you're unemployed you start to lose confidence. You put your jeans on, you think 'I'll shave an hour later than normal; won't polish my shoes today — I'll polish them tomorrow.' The only way you can shake someone out of that is with discipline. And that's what we give to these people. I really am quite hard with them I want them to get back into work. There's only one sure way of doing it — that's to keep them on their toes' (course administrator, Case-Study D).

- That education should help individuals to treat unemployment as an **opportunity** to explore or create new options. Such options might include education for its own sake, new areas of employment, or alternatives to conventional employment — such as self-employment, setting up a co-operative, or voluntary work. Here the underlying belief is that education may help individuals to turn the potentially negative experience of unemployment into a positive one, so that learners ultimately lead **more** fulfilled lives than hitherto.

> 'A large number of them, when they've been through the programme, say that going through their transition from one job to another has possibly been the best thing that's ever happened to them. It's given them the chance to re-adjust, to think about what they're looking for, and to sort out a job that is really what they want to do' (development officer, Case-Study D).

> 'Absolutely. That's what it's all about! We're suggesting that many of the activities people are engaging in — be they hobbies, be they community activities — are purposeful activities in which there is structured, developed, learning going on, and which can become long-term projects' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

In these terms, Objective 1 (employability) is concerned mainly with **escape** but could be concerned with **opportunity**; Objective 2 (coping) is, as its title suggests, concerned essentially with **coping**; Objective 3 (context) and Objective 4 (leisure), in their different ways, could be concerned either with **coping** or with **opportunity**; and Objective 5 (opportunity creation) is concerned with **opportunity**.

30. The objectives can also, however, be viewed on another dimension, which refers to their implications in political and social terms. Many workers on educational programmes for the unemployed are acutely aware of the dilemmas and conflicts posed by the fact that their efforts are designed to help the

unemployed with their **individual** problems, and can have little impact on the **social** context from which these problems largely stem.

> 'One of the problems with working in this is: here we are, parasitically climbing on the back of yet another social problem — yet another cluster of social problems. As a result, we ourselves grow educationally fat on other people's problems. Maybe that overstates it. But I do worry and I am becoming increasingly aware of the possibility that we might become part of the poverty industry — making extravagant claims for what we are doing when the reality of what we are doing is so very very marginal. If you have in Southwark — as we do! — 20,000 unemployed, and packed tight behind them God knows how many tens of thousands who are unwaged... then throwing a few thousand pounds at it is not only derisory — it's obscene if you try to make extravagant claims for the impact you're having on the community. We can justify our programmes on the impact they have on some people — the effect on the wider community is another question altogether' (principal, Case-Study B).

31. On these grounds, there are arguments that can be levelled against most of the objectives in our model:

- Regarding **Objective 1** (employability):

— encouraging people to devote all their energies to seeking employment in a situation in which employment for all is not available could have the effect of increasing the stress and sense of inadequacy that stem from repeated failure;

— this is especially so because the attitudes that increase employability can also make it more difficult to cope with being unemployed;

— it can also be argued that focusing on making good the deficiencies of the unemployed in terms of employability maintains the economic and political *status quo* by shifting attention away from it: it suggests that what is needed is not economic and political reform, but ways of making good the inadequacies of unemployed individuals (30, pp.83-85).

- Regarding **Objective 2** (coping) and **Objective 4** (leisure):

— helping people to learn how to cope with unemployment could be regarded as encouraging them to tolerate the intolerable;

— this is particularly the case in a society in which employment remains the chief source of status, of social identity, and of income.

> "Education for leisure...' is an idea or classification in the minds of providers, which stripped of its elaborations, is little more than giving out lollipops...' (17, pp.114-115).

> 'One of the things that I was absolutely certain it wasn't going to be was a placebo for unemployment' (course organiser, Case-Study B).

- Regarding **Objective 5** (opportunity creation):

— focusing too much on self-employment etc. could imply that the solution to unemployment is for unemployed individuals to be more 'enterprising', and that people who do not set up on their own are feckless — this could be used as a reason for reducing or withdrawing their benefits, and could become a classic case of 'blaming the victim';

— it could also fuel the 'black' economy, so raising difficult ethical and social issues.

> 'Part of the burden which the unemployed man or woman has to bear is the stigma, real or fancied, that attaches to them; we have much evidence of their sensitivity on this point. Yet in present circumstances (and for a long future, as far as can be seen) the stigma is undeserved' (3, p.11).

32. Objective 3 (context) represents, in some respects, an attempt to respond to these dilemmas. It is justified, in part, in psychological terms: if unemployed people understand that unemployment is not due to the personal inadequacy of the unemployed, this may make it easier for them to avoid the destructive effects which their unemployment may have on their confidence and self-respect. It is also justified in terms of alerting people to the nature of the system that has caused their problems and of helping them to learn how to work to change it. There are, however, dangers here too (30, pp.85-86):

— increased awareness of the size and complexity of the forces that cause unemployment could lead unemployed people to feel a sense of impotence in the face of these forces;

— this in turn could lead to a fatalism which not only reduces their chances of finding a job but also produces a more general sense of alienation and disenchantment;

— it may attract criticism and opposition from the public authorities on whose financial support most educational provision depends;

— it places the unemployed in the forefront of the pressures for change, which may expose them to risk and may mean that excessive expectations are raised of a group whose power is relatively limited.

> The Sheffield Centre Against Unemployment 'would view unemployment as a consequence of capitalist relations of production. These economic relations are also seen as what must be changed in order to abolish unemployment. However, this political change cannot be accomplished by the unemployed themselves — precisely since they are excluded from these relations. Hence the stress on the unity of the employed and the unemployed within a broad labour movement. However, it's unclear what the political role of the unemployed should be within this alliance!' (25, p.56).

33. In the end, resolving these dilemmas is a question of balance. To focus **exclusively** on context poses difficulties of the kinds mentioned in para. 32. But as a secondary objective, linked with others, it can have a valuable role to play in helping individuals to understand their situation in broader terms. It can also help to respond to the dilemmas raised in para. 31 by clarifying some of the value issues that are involved. Amongst these are:

- Whether one believes that the unemployed should always accept any job offered to them, rather than 'live off the state'; or whether one believes that everyone has a right to a basic income, and a right to exert some choice over their job.

> 'There's a lot of pressure to get people back into low-paid jobs. We've had a number of people who've left the catering industry because they can get more money on the dole. I guess my job could be seen as getting them back in. I'd find that morally indefensible' (tutor, Case-Study A).

- Whether one believes that everyone can find a job if they really look hard enough; or whether one believes that, at least in some parts of the country, to encourage this idea is to collude with a deceit.
- Whether one believes that 'fiddling' and black-economy activities are socially and morally wrong; or whether one believes they are acceptable coping strategies in a society in which the benefits provided to the unemployed are inadequate.

It is important that tutors involved in work with the unemployed should think through and periodically review their position on these kinds of issues, and should be clear about whether they intend to base their programme on their own stance or to adopt a more 'neutral' approach which allows participants to explore and apply their own responses to these questions.

34. Such judgements may be influenced by local or regional factors. In relation to the state of the local labour market, for example, there are likely to be considerable differences between:

- Areas of low unemployment.
- Areas where high unemployment is endemic and familiar (e.g. parts of the North-East, Merseyside, and some rural areas) and may not carry the same stigma as in other communities (see e.g. 17, p.44).
- Areas where high unemployment is new and unfamiliar (e.g. the West Midlands).

These may be related to wider cultural differences: for example, in local political traditions, in attitudes to sex-roles, or in the existence or absence of an 'enterprise culture'.

27

83. These trends are perhaps most fully exemplified in the 'self-help learning groups' which have begun to grow among the unemployed and among other groups too.

> 'In each case the people involved are meeting to learn together in settings they feel comfortable in — at home, on the train, or at work — at a time convenient for themselves, to increase their knowledge of a topic they are interested in. They also decide on the topic and on the pace of their study.
>
> 'Interest in self help learning groups has increased in the last few years, and the numbers of groups — organised both locally and nationally — has also increased. Groups have been set up for mothers and toddlers, for unemployed people, in community centres, factories and on housing estates' (10, p.2).

84. Unemployed groups — like other adult groups — can become highly motivated, and this, in turn, can make them very rewarding learners to work with.

> 'They're very motivated. Which means you're more than half-way there. That's in contrast to a lot of young people — particularly school-leavers! They **want** to come along. The people on the courses I'm involved in are there because they want to be there — not because they're school-leavers or they've been bullied into a YTS course' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study A).

Given this level of motivation, it becomes possible for tutors to challenge learners and to lead them to question their ideas and experiences critically.

> 'You don't just reproduce experience in the classroom. It's not **just** that. It's actually trying to get them to reflect critically upon these experiences. You use the motivation and experience they bring with them as the force which gets them through their time at the college. But we do feel able to disagree and to challenge' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

Because tutors do not present themselves as the sole possessors of knowledge, it should not be inferred that their role is a totally passive one — as well as facilitating group or individual learning, they may actively contribute to it!

85. PLANNING POINTS

- With groups of unemployed adults, it may be more than usually necessary to emphasise the differences between the formal learning situation they are presently involved in and their memories — sometimes negative — of schooling.
- Active learning methods can help to build confidence by encouraging the unemployed individual to take responsibility for his or her own learning.
- Group work may have an important role to play in generating a high level of motivation amongst unemployed learners.
- It should not be inferred that the tutor's role is a passive one. For an adult-to-adult relationship to be established, the tutor should also contribute actively, sometimes in a challenging way, to the student's learning.

86. **Theme Ten: Learner Support.** Guidance and support have been found to be particularly important aspects of work with the unemployed. Indeed, many initiatives seem to place as much emphasis on support as on learning itself.

41

35. In addition, different views may be held about the future of work. Some people believe that unemployment is a short-term problem which will eventually 'work itself out'. Others believe that it is a much more long-term problem, reflecting fundamental structural changes that are taking place in the nature and distribution of employment. On the latter view, a number of possible scenarios of the future can be painted. These include:

- The **unemployment scenario**, in which unemployment continues to be defined in the essentially negative way it currently is and to afflict the lives of millions of people.
- The **leisure scenario**, in which those outside employment, instead of being stigmatised, form the basis of a new 'leisure class'.
- The **employment scenario**, in which ways are found of distributing employment, and the income and status associated with it, more evenly.
- The **work scenario**, in which the concept of work is broadened beyond employment, and greater value is attached to self-employment and to forms of work outside the formal economy.

These scenarios are explored and discussed in more detail elsewhere (15; 30). They have very different implications for programmes for the unemployed, and again are likely to lead to very different balances being struck between the objectives outlined earlier in this section and also between the arguments outlined in para. 31.

36. In broad terms, there would seem in principle to be three socio-political aims which programmes for the unemployed might adopt, whether tacitly or explicitly:

- **Social control**: reinforcing the *status quo*. Programmes which are concerned solely with encouraging the unemployed to enter employment, or to cope with being unemployed, might be seen as having this aim.
- **Social change**: seeking to change the *status quo* in prescribed directions. Programmes concerned solely with raising political awareness based on a particular ideological position might be seen as having this aim.
- **Individual autonomy**: 'encouraging people to take as much control as possible in changing their own lives' (17, p.114). Programmes concerned with exploring a range of options, and with respecting the autonomy of the learner, might be seen as having this aim.

Balances may be struck between these: the 'individual autonomy' aim, for example, may move closer to 'social change' the more attention there is to the social and political context of individual action. These balances may also change with time in response to changing needs and demands.

> 'The nature of our courses has changed. In 1981 we looked fairly closely at the political economy of unemployment, the kinds of practical skills that users of unemployment centres would need and so on. We were fitting in with our campaigning model. We've actually shifted away from this quite a bit. Now we're much more looking, often in quite an analytical and distanced way, and a **creative** way, at the experience of unemployment and the ways people use their lives' (course organiser, Case-Study C).

37. The potential range of curricular content is therefore very wide, as is the range of issues which it raises. Many of these issues have essentially to do with values — political and ethical, institutional and individual. Questions of this sort are never very far away in education. In some areas of provision, however, it can be quite easy to defer them. With provision for the unemployed, on the other hand, both institutions and the individuals who work in them have to confront such issues in a very direct way.

III. MANAGING AND IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Planning for Diversity

38. Having raised some of the general options and underlying issues in Section II, this section is concerned in a more immediately practical way with planning, running and refining educational programmes with unemployed people. The intention is to identify the main common themes of curriculum development which have emerged from current practice, so providing 'food for thought' for those involved in or approaching the management and implementation of such programmes.
39. The programmes need to be diverse. Unemployed people differ widely in their backgrounds, in their reasons for considering education, and in their learning needs and wants. In addition, institutions attempting to meet these diverse needs differ greatly.

> Some idea of the range of institutions offering provision in this area is given by the five case-studies chosen for this manual (see Section IV). These are:
>
> A. A medium-sized further education college in the once prosperous West Midlands.
>
> B. An institute of adult education serving a south London borough hard-hit by unemployment.
>
> C. A residential college with strong trade-union links providing a mix of short-and long-term courses in the North of England.
>
> D. A programme for redundant managers and executives, run through a Regional Management Centre and based at a polytechnic in the East Midlands.
>
> E. A group of small initiatives connected (sometimes loosely) with a school and community college in the West Country.

For example, there is a world of difference between the situation of a principal of a large, well-established college of further education seeking to make the provision offered by the college more available and relevant to the large numbers of unemployed people within its catchment area, and the situation of a WEA tutor who has been personally approached by a group of half-a-dozen redundant steelworkers who would like some help in producing a history of their town. It is hoped that **both** will be able to benefit from this section. Whilst their working contexts certainly differ, our belief is that they will — to be effective — be faced with similar questions, although the answers they arrive at may well be very different.

40. There are fourteen main themes which need to be addressed. These can be grouped under four headings, derived from the major steps in curriculum development identified in an earlier FEU publication (7). The groups of themes are:

(a) **Principles and Policies**

Theme One: Values and Principles
Theme Two: Constraints
Theme Three: Collaboration

(b) **Design**

Theme Four: Target Groups
Theme Five: Identifying Learner Needs
Theme Six: Location and Timing
Theme Seven: Publicity

(c) **Implementation**

Theme Eight: Negotiation
Theme Nine: Learning/Teaching Methods
Theme Ten: Learner Support

(d) **Evaluation and Development**

Theme Eleven: Assessment and Accreditation
Theme Twelve: Monitoring
Theme Thirteen: Staffing and Staff Development
Theme Fourteen: Integration

Workers agree that 'listening' is a very important part of such support.

> 'Most of my work is, in fact, not teaching in the classroom at all. It's sitting in the canteen at lunch-time, talking to people and creating that atmosphere, simply by being there all the time' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

Referral to existing guidance resources (Citizens' Advice Bureaux, educational guidance services, Careers Service, psychiatric services, etc.) may be helpful in some cases, but should be regarded as supplementing rather than replacing the need for guidance and support within the educational provision itself. The resource implications of adequate guidance and support need to be clearly recognised: reasonably low tutor-student ratios are of particular importance.

89. It is also necessary to see learner support in broader terms than is implied by words such as 'guidance' or 'counselling'. Support for unemployed learners should pay additional attention to the physical resources made available to them. Included under this heading might be the provision of creche facilities, or making available rooms which are felt to 'belong' to the group or which might be earmarked for private consultation between tutors and learners.
90. The cost of studying is self-evidently a problem for people living in relative poverty. When planning educational programmes for unemployed people, tutors should bear in mind the necessity not only for arranging that tuition fees be reduced or waived, but for helping with extra 'hidden' costs such as transport, books/stationery, refreshments etc. which may make the crucial difference to an individual's ability to participate in the programmes offered. Organisational arrangements can help reduce some costs: for example, creche provision and, as suggested in para. 69, offering classes at times when advantage can be taken of cheap travel facilities (this latter should also help those who need to fit their study within the span of their children's school day). [Further ways of supporting those studying part-time under the DHSS '21-hour rule' will be found in the FEU's Guidance Note 3 (**Curriculum Implications of the 12/21-Hour Rules: Part-Time Education for the Unemployed**, 1984).]
91. The support offered by other learners can be important too. Often individual learners provide considerable help to one another, in relation both to their educational programme and to personal problems they are facing. The resources of other learners can also be harnessed by using group guidance and counselling.

> Some WEA districts have set up series of group meetings, under the guidance of a tutor, at which the interests of the members form the agenda or curriculum. In one group, for example, 'personal difficulties, including those connected with physical and mental health as well as employment aspirations, were aired by the members and considered collectively. The tutor had obtained practical assistance for some individuals within the group, and it seemed unlikely that many could have sought this or exchanged views in any orderly way without the framework offered by this weekly meeting' (16, pp.8-9).

> The experience of some self-help learning groups is relevant here:
>
> 'The Ladywood Methodist Church Unemployed Group began to study the NEC 'O' level Law course as a discussion group in January 1983. There are 8 regular attenders at group meetings, all with different backgrounds and study experience...
>
> 'The group members study at home during the week and meet every Friday to discuss the part of the course they have covered during the week. Some of the group members get together on a different day and help each other with the ideas and information covered in the text, or with note taking and essay writing.
>
> 'The group members also give each other support in their Friday meetings when everyone has the chance to say what has been happening to them during the week and people help each other out, by listening or with practical suggestions for ways of overcoming problems' (10, pp.34-35).

92. Group support may be particularly important for unemployed students taking part in provision on an 'in-fill' basis. Because the needs of unemployed adult students differ in some significant respects from those of more 'traditional' students, it is especially important for institutions which adopt an in-fill approach to ensure that additional support is made available which enables these needs to be met. This

Each theme closes with a small number of 'planning points'. These points form the basis of a Curriculum Planning Check-List which closes the section.

(a) Principles and Policies

41. **Theme One: Values and Principles**. The range of values and principles which can underlie provision for the unemployed has been discussed in some detail in Section II, and will not be further elaborated here. In practice, most initiatives seek to meet a range of objectives which are based on a blend of these values and principles. A prime task for curriculum developers is to identify what stance they intend to adopt when negotiating the design of programmes with potential learners. Section II has outlined the options and the issues that need to be taken into account in choosing between them.

42. One of the most frequently mentioned principles behind provision for the adult unemployed is that a key priority in designing programmes should be that they aim to raise the learner's overall level of **confidence**.

> 'One of the things that we find runs through and which is difficult to legislate for, to build into syllabuses, is confidence-raising. We've found this an absolutely essential part of the curriculum with this group' (head of community education, Case-Study A).

Building confidence is, of course, given much stress in many areas of adult education — particularly basic education (8, ch.V). However, this emphasis seems particularly important in relation to the unemployed, given the low morale typical of the majority of unemployed groups at the outset of a programme.

> 'When they come in on the first morning, you can almost feel the atmosphere. They're all low, depressed... You can always measure the morale-boosting by the third day of the course. They're laughing and joking — all keen to get stuck in' (course tutor, Case-Study D).

Many of the characteristics of successful programmes are geared towards this principle of confidence-raising.

43. PLANNING POINTS

- Decisions need to be made on the intended value of education to unemployed people. In particular, programmes need to choose or make compromises between three aims: helping learners to 'cope' with unemployment, helping them to 'escape' unemployment through a rapid return to work, and helping them to treat unemployment as an 'opportunity' to explore new options (see para. 29).
- Consideration should be given to the socio-political stance underlying the provision. In this respect, attention should be paid to the three alternatives of 'social control', 'social change', and 'individual autonomy' (see para. 35).
- Decisions need to be made on the relative degree of attention to be given to specific objectives concerned with 'employability', with 'coping', with 'context', with 'leisure', and with 'opportunity creation' (see paras. 19-27).
- The principle of confidence-raising is an important emphasis in successful programmes. It may be seen as underlying all aspects of the curriculum.

44. **Theme Two: Constraints**. The very economic climate which is associated with high levels of unemployment provides a major initial constraint on provision. It is not easy to find funds to resource programmes — and existing resources may already be thin on the ground. It is extremely rare for provision for the unemployed to pay for itself. Unemployed people, typically, are faced with very tight financial budgets: paying the full cost of education is likely to be low on the list of priorities for many of them.

> This problem has been recognised by many local authorities which have arranged for course fees to be either completely waived or substantially subsidised.

is particularly necessary where unemployed students join a programme on a 'roll-on/roll-off' basis, at different times of the year from other students.

93. The guidance offered to learners needs to embrace what they hope to move on to — whether it be a job, further educational provision, or some other avenue. This may involve institutional considerations (see paras. 102-103). In the end, however, close attention needs to be given to the personal goals and values of the individual concerned. There may also be a case for offering continuing support to those who fail to achieve their goals immediately — through some kind of ongoing group or club, for example.

94. PLANNING POINTS

- The provision of guidance and support may merit special attention with unemployed groups.
- Although some guidance and support may be offered on a formal basis, the informal support offered by staff and by other learners can be of crucial importance.
- Support needs to extend to making sure that organisational arrangements are sensitive to the economic and other constraints on learners.
- Particular attention should be paid to learner support by institutions which adopt an 'in-fill' approach to provision for the unemployed.
- Help needs to be given to learners in deciding where to move on to, and also perhaps in offering continuing support to them if they fail to achieve their goals immediately.

(d) Evaluation and Development

95. **Theme Eleven: Assessment and Accreditation.** Many staff question the relevance of the concept of 'assessment' — at a formal level at least — to work with the unemployed. Indeed, a number go on to argue that formal assessment may be damaging in this context, undermining the message they are trying to give to learners that provision focused on their needs is 'not like being back at school'.

> 'On the short courses, we're bringing in people for whom assessment would simply be one more intimidating fact about a strange institution... Going to college — for these people — is a frightening experience. Then to tell them they're going to be assessed — it would be an insult really. 'What do you want to assess us for — **we're** not doing 'O' levels!' ' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

96. These arguments do not, however, rule out all forms of assessment. They seem to apply particularly to norm-referenced 'marks out of ten' approaches. There remains broad agreement on the potential value to unemployed learners of individual feedback, which can help them to recognise the degree of progress which they are making.

> The following statement is taken from an unpublished description of a programme of work with the unemployed undertaken by Grimsby College of Technology:
>
> 'Adults need feedback on their progress during the course. Each person starts at a different point and level and so each individual's progress is measured against his or her own particular profile. One aim of this course is to help students gain independence so that they can spot their own faults and correct and improve their own performance without heavy reliance on external assessment. This self-referenced improvement can be of real lasting value to the adult when he or she looks back on the course or applies new abilities in new situations.'

97. Many staff who object to over-formal assessment apply the argument *a fortiori* to accreditation and certification, asserting that a major task in their work is disabusing the unemployed of the notion that certificates can act as passports to employment. Some conflicting voices are raised, however, over the value of certification. Particularly in the fields of numeracy and literacy — where, in other respects, perhaps the greatest efforts are made to distance provision from school-room memories — some staff have found that offering the ultimate goal of a City and Guilds or RSA certificate can have very beneficial effects for some students.

45. One response to this issue may be for an institution to look at ways in which existing budgets may be 're-prioritised' to support work with the unemployed. It may be possible, for instance, to allow more financially viable courses to subsidise such work, either directly or indirectly. This may be difficult to achieve, but if the exercise can be used to generate support across the host institution for initiatives involving the unemployed, staff commitment to and understanding of the work may be enhanced. Establishing work with the unemployed as an important institutional priority may also be an important step towards attracting financial support for the programme from the local community.

> In Case-Study A, work with the unemployed got under way during 1980 when unemployment in the city more than doubled during the year. The college principal believed that responding in some way to this development — which was traumatic for what had previously been a very prosperous city — should be a major priority for the college. He obtained authorisation from the college governors to establish a 'hardship fund' — contributed to by local trades-union branches — to enable the unemployed to benefit from college provision.

46. Nonetheless, given the financial position facing educational institutions in general, it will sometimes be necessary for those wanting to mount a programme to seek funding over and above that available through normal budgets, in order to ensure adequate or near-adequate resources. Government-originated sources of funding for some forms of provision do exist — notably through the MSC's Adult Training Strategy, and through other sources like the Urban Programme and the European Social Fund.
47. When an institution decides to seek such 'outside' money, a new set of constraints may be introduced. It may be necessary for the proposed programme to meet certain criteria which have been decided in advance by the funding agency. The MSC, for instance, often requires that programmes for unemployed adults should achieve a particular placement rate into work or further training in order to qualify for continued funding. Some of the principles which shape the curriculum may therefore be taken out of the hands of the institutional policy-makers.
48. Another feature of such 'outside' funding is that it is normally provided for a finite period of time. This can have the beneficial effect of tying the initiatives to specific timetabled goals. It may however make it more difficult to integrate them into the general work of the institution (see paras. 112-114). It may also raise some important additional curricular issues in terms of staff support and staff development: these issues are discussed later in this section (paras. 105-111).

> One approach to resolving the curricular issues raised by dependence on funding from external agencies is provided by the plans for the Bideford Bakehouse project (Case-Study E). This puts forward the idea of a 'mixed economy', with a proportion of funding coming from agencies such as MSC, but with the initiative generating additional funds of its own with an ultimate view to becoming entirely self-sufficient. This approach seems to reflect a desire to be able both to ensure the long-term survival of the initiative and to achieve increased freedom in policy-making.

49. A further set of constraints stems from the fact that, as discussed in Section II (paras. 30-36), many of the questions raised by unemployment have political implications if they are pursued to any length. For **some** institutions (there are exceptions, Case-Study C being one) this may produce difficulties. In particular:
    - The institutional ethos may be such that extensive discussion of frankly political issues is regarded as being outside the legitimate scope of provision. Hence, provision for the unemployed may be constrained where it touches on taboo areas.
    - Staff may not feel competent to handle sensitive political areas — because it would mean straying beyond the limits of their knowledge, or because they may feel uncomfortable in dealing with areas which require them to share their own values with learners in a way which is not required in their usual teaching.

> 'If we were getting into questions of why we have got the economic situation we have, and philosophical questions about the Protestant Work Ethic, I think we'd be getting into areas which we don't feel comfortable to handle' (development officer, Case-Study D).

50. PLANNING POINTS

- Educational resources are presently at a premium — institutions should look closely at their budgetary priorities to investigate ways in which more support can be provided to work with the unemployed.
- Curriculum managers may also want to consider seeking external funding for initiatives involving the unemployed — perhaps from the MSC.
- Programmes must usually satisfy certain criteria to qualify for such external funding: this means that institutions may have less of a free hand in framing the curriculum than might otherwise be the case.
- The extent to which the institution is willing to take on board discussion of overtly political issues may influence the curriculum it offers.

51. **Theme Three: Collaboration**. If curriculum planners are fully to take on board the diversity of educational needs and wants amongst the unemployed, it will often be necessary for them to recognise that a comprehensive programme of provision may require collaboration between different initiatives and institutions. In any community there exist a number of education providers — formal and informal — with differing resources and expertise to offer. Developing a programme of work with the unemployed should be used as an opportunity to emphasise the extent to which these differing providers can complement rather than compete with each other. The most important beneficiaries of such collaboration will be unemployed people themselves, but it may also have the significant spin-off benefit that staff from different styles of initiative may be able to share and learn from each other's experiences and practices.

52. Collaboration between LEA-based initiatives and voluntary providers can be particularly fruitful and creative, bringing the formal education system into direct contact with more informal provision which has arisen in response to locally perceived needs.

> Case-Study E provides some interesting instances of interaction between local-authority provision and community-derived voluntary initiatives. Programmes for the unemployed in Bideford have frequently been carried out with the support and backing of the community college, and with a pivotal role being played by the college's adult tutor. They have originated, however, from ideas and activities generated by people who have not worked in the formal education system but who have established close communication and collaboration with similar initiatives through a voluntary network — the Cornwall and Devon Unemployment Resources Network (CADURN).

> Northern College (Case-Study C) has always adopted a policy of collaboration with voluntary groups and agencies — indeed, the college's short-course programme has been designed to be dependent on such collaboration. This approach is highlighted by the Dearne Valley project which, with support from REPLAN, the college is undertaking jointly with South Yorkshire WEA. The aim of the project is to identify educational needs in this economically-depressed area, and then to help educational institutions, including Northern College, to be directly responsive to these needs.

53. It is possible to envisage a number of different levels of collaboration:
    - **Communication** — where institutions and agencies retain their individual programmes and modes of work, but efforts are made to arrive at a better understanding of each other.
    - **Co-operation** — where institutions and agencies collaborate on a joint project or task.
    - **Co-ordination** — where institutions and agencies alter their established working patterns to provide a programme on an integrated basis.

    In each case, attention should be given to the principle that collaboration should become a reality rather than a vehicle for rhetoric.

54. Collaboration between different providers within the same area may be of particular value because an individual learner's needs are likely to change as he or she gains more confidence in the educational process. There are many instances of unemployed adults initially enrolling in a basic-education course and then, as their confidence in their own abilities and their trust in tutorial staff grows, seeking to tackle more technical or more academic work (see also para. 102). Where such provision is based in

different institutions, progression will be greatly facilitated if there is close collaboration between them — for instance, between adult-education and further-education providers.

> Southwark Institute of Adult Education (Case-Study B) has run a 'pre-vocational' course, aimed primarily at the unemployed, for sports leaders. Participants work towards the Central Council for Physical Recreation's Sports Leaders Award. This preparatory course has been developed so that participants may easily move from it to a City and Guilds 778 course run at Southwark College which leads to a recognised professional qualification for sports organisers. Institute staff have been involved in selection interviews for the college courses.

> At Grimsby College of Technology, according to an unpublished report, several staff involved in pre-TOPS work have also worked on a volunteer basis in the Adult Literacy Scheme — which in this LEA (Humberside) is organised through a separate adult-education service. This is thought to have led to a good relationship and exchange of information between this sector of the college's work and adult education, such that each refers potential clients to the most appropriate service for their needs. It is said to have removed any unhealthy spirit of competition or rivalry between the two sectors of provision.

55. PLANNING POINTS

- Attention should be given, at a very early stage, to the potential for collaboration between different educational providers. This may be essential if the full diversity of needs amongst the unemployed is to be recognised in the provision available to them.
- Particular attention should be given to collaboration between statutory and voluntary providers. This may help the formal provision to become more responsive to local community needs.
- Collaboration between different providers is also likely to facilitate student progression.

(b) Design

56. **Theme Four: Target Groups**. Superficially it might seem an easy enough job to define the target group for a programme for the unemployed. In practice, it is often a complex task. The questions to be resolved hinge around two issues:

- The difficulty in defining who is or is not unemployed.
- The great diversity amongst the individuals who fall under the 'unemployed' rubric, however it is defined.

57. A convenient and readily administered definition of the 'unemployed' is that used to compile Government statistics — that is, anyone who holds a UB40 card. This definition has the additional advantage to course managers that it is relatively easy to explain and justify to external bodies. It is the definition used by the MSC for many of the programmes which it funds, and by some LEAs in schemes for remitting fees.

58. However, a significant number of workers — probably a majority — express dissatisfaction with this definition. They see it as too narrow. Their argument is that there are many individuals whose educational needs are indistinguishable from those of people formally claiming benefit, and that these individuals too should be encouraged to take part in provision for the unemployed. In particular, it is pointed out, a definition which focuses on the UB40 card is likely to discriminate against women returning to work. This line of argument leads to a less restrictive definition, covering learners who are not presently in employment but who have an interest in being employed in the future.

> 'They may be women with families wanting to return to work. They're not unemployed but they see themselves as employable' (head of community education, Case-Study A).
>
> 'I see no fundamental difference between the unwaged and the unemployed. The two biggest categories in our day-time provision are the unemployed and women who have young children and are thus unwaged. But the women who are unwaged want nothing more than to get a job where they can work with their children, or to get a qualification so they can get work in a couple of years when their kids are at school. So in a sense, both aims are parallel, though one may be more immediate than the other. And their needs are **exactly** the same' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

This definition, however, might be in danger of excluding those unemployed people who have little prospect of, or no real interest in, returning to employment. Moreover, some staff feel that such a definition is **too** flexible and permits workers to avoid the difficult task of reaching the 'genuine unemployed'.

> 'I'm saying they find it easier to work with a more all-embracing title. The catchment is that much greater: it includes women at home, people who would not always be thought of as unemployed. So the unwaged is a much broader group to tackle. I do find that when staff leave the narrow definition of work with the unemployed, it is an indication that they themselves are finding it tough' (principal, Case-Study B).

Other staff eschew the use of all such terms when actually working face-to-face with individual students.

> 'I use terms like 'the unwaged' and 'the unemployed' when I come to meetings — talking to people who might be able to give us some money. Otherwise, when you're actually doing the work, it's a useless, damaging term' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

59. There are very large numbers of unemployed people, whichever definition is used. Consequently, many initiatives are designed with a particular sub-group of the unemployed in mind. This is to provide effective use of limited available resources and also, in some instances, to ensure some commonality of needs and background between participants.

60. Thus a number of institutions operate on the basis of a list of priorities — which may or may not be explicit — of the kinds of people who they see as having first call on their resources.

> 'It's groups rather than a group, amongst whom high priority will be given to blacks, females, single parents, the physically or mentally handicapped, and the elderly' (curriculum co-ordinator, Case-Study B).

This may well reflect priorities basic to the nature of the institution in question.

> A striking comparison in this respect can be drawn between Case-Study C (Northern College) and Case-Study D (East Midlands Regional Management Centre). Northern College is a 'second chance' institution — a basic qualification for entry to its courses is a lack of academic or technical certificates. EMRMC, on the other hand, operates programmes in which it is a pre-condition that the redundant student should qualify for the Professional and Executive Register. The two target groups are virtually mutually exclusive.

Some programmes operate with target groups which are particularly tightly defined. Amongst these are initiatives which are mounted to provide educational support for workers made redundant *en masse* from large individual employers: the Consett programme (17) is a good example. The important general point here is the need to ensure that, within the **overall** provision in any given area, no significant group is being excluded.

61. PLANNING POINTS

- In framing initiatives aimed at 'the unemployed', curriculum managers will need to arrive at a working definition of this term — it may be useful to explore the distinction between 'the unemployed' and 'the unwaged'.
- Having arrived at such a definition, it is then necessary to consider detailed priorities — amongst the unemployed, **who** should provision be geared at? In making such decisions, account should be taken of institutional priorities, and also of the general balance of local provision for the **unemployed.**

62. **Theme Five: Identifying Learner Needs**. Having established a target group, it is also necessary to begin to identify learner needs and to match the broad outlines of provision to these needs. A method which is perhaps so obvious that its value is sometimes overlooked or underestimated is that of asking unemployed people themselves what kind of educational provision might attract them. This can be a valuable exercise, particularly if tackled in a systematic way (see e.g. 23). Local educational guidance services for adults (2; 5), too, are often a useful resource for identifying what kinds of provision local unemployed people are consistently asking for.

> Three of the case-studies provide examples of projects designed to identify learner needs:
>
> - In Case-Study A, an FEU-funded research project was carried out in which a random sample of unemployed people were systematically interviewed about their perceived educational needs (12).
> - In Case-Study B, an outreach approach has been adopted in an attempt to meet the educational needs of the unwaged living on the vast local housing estates. Workers have knocked on doors and have asked people about what kind of educational provision they might be interested in. The greatest success has been found when these door-knock campaigns have focused on definable groups within the community — e.g. particular ethnic groups. In addition, the staff of the local educational guidance service for adults are systematically involved in working groups and course planning teams developing new provision.
> - In Case-Study C, the collaborative project set up in the Dearne Valley between the college and the local WEA has involved the appointment of an an outreach worker to liaise with community groups so that particular courses may be arranged which respond to their perceived needs.

63. Such activities can, at the very least, give institutions a picture of the kinds of provision which are **not** wanted by potential learners. To give an example, in Case-Study A it was found that unemployed people in Coventry were much less interested in courses in welfare rights than college staff had imagined. Asking unemployed people about their educational needs can, however, be hard work. Initially, education is not likely to be prominent amongst their priorities. Hence they are not always very good at articulating their needs — and what they have to say may not be very specific.

> 'The bland assumption was that the unemployed would have a good idea of their own training and educational needs. It became apparent that, just as industry has no clear idea of the training needs over the next five years, so with the adult unemployed. The message which came back insistently was: 'I want to work. What I want is something that will help me get a job.' It was as wide as that' (college principal, Case-Study A).

64. Difficulties of this kind, however, should not be turned into arguments against the value of such exercises. There can be no justification for expending effort on projects aimed at the unemployed which do not fulfil identifiable needs. Further, initiatives which do not seem to coincide with needs perceived by the unemployed themselves are most unlikely to attract students. It seems that the most successful programmes are those where the most effort is given to matching provision directly to learner needs both at the initial design stage and at every subsequent stage of implementation. This therefore has implications for the tutorial methods used and for the importance which should be placed on negotiation throughout the programme (see paras. 77-79).
65. Some institutions have found a good working knowledge of the demography and labour market of the communities they serve to be helpful in identifying potential needs which they can seek to meet.

> 'We have identified gaps in the employment markets which we have then helped unemployed people to fill through our courses. We know a great deal about our client group — fortunately! The borough have taken great pains to analyse the census information and so on, and we get regular documents on the unemployment situation and on where the vacancies are. So we **can** identify gaps' (principal, Case-Study B).

Such statistics are readily available in some local authorities. In other areas it may be necessary to expend rather more effort to obtain them.

66. PLANNING POINTS

- In designing initiatives, it is useful to make direct efforts to elicit the views of unemployed people themselves on what their educational needs are.
- Statistical information on the local labour market etc. may be helpful to curriculum planners. Some effort may be required to collate this information.

67. **Theme Six: Location and Timing**. A major principle in designing provision should be that of eliminating some of the unnecessary barriers which may prevent unemployed people from taking up what is available. This involves paying special attention to the physical location of provision and also to its timing.

68. A strategy which some projects have employed has been to base provision 'off-site', away from the main educational institution. In part, the idea here has been to 'take provision to the learners', thereby reducing or eliminating transport costs which could otherwise act as a serious barrier to unemployed people on low budgets. Another intention has been to make provision less reminiscent of school and of large, impersonal institutions. Various centres have been used in this way, including community centres, centres for the unemployed, etc.

> In one college, use was made of a flat located in the YMCA building in the middle of the city. 'Its location and ease of access was very important as they saved students' travelling costs — a very important consideration. Because the flat was away from the College site and had no other students about the atmosphere generated was very relaxed... The facilities, such as being able to make coffee whenever they felt like it, were also very much appreciated by both staff and students. Also of considerable value was the fact that the site was supportive of close, personal interaction and free of the normal institutional restrictions.
>
> 'There is no doubt that this type of environment was attractive to the type of unemployed adult who was resistant to and possibly fearful of attending College... However, experience with another course who used this location showed that, after a term, they were willing and keen to attend College and join more traditional courses' (12, pp.37-38, 65-66).

There seems however to be some resistance to using premises like working men's clubs (12, p.25; 17, pp.86-96), partly because such premises may not have appropriate facilities, but also perhaps because of a wish on the part of the unemployed to protect their personal 'territory' — particularly territory where they are able to some extent to maintain their previous status and social identity. Provision which might threaten this or might explore changes may be better located on more 'neutral' ground.

69. Consideration must also be given to the timing of provision. There is widespread agreement that to take account of the nature of unemployment, education providers must become more flexible in this respect. The vast majority of programmes have accepted the need to provide day-time (or, in certain circumstances, 'twilight') sessions, as opposed to the more traditional evening classes. Attention to details like timing provision so that participants can benefit from cheap fares may also be important. Some have taken this further and have attempted to structure provision in such a way as to make it possible for individual learners to arrive and to leave at times which suit them.

> 'If you can give the control, not just the control of their learning but also the control of their **attendance**, to them, and give them complete freedom to work as they want, to come as they want, to leave when they want, it creates more and more distance from the educational experience which they've had in the past' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

70. This flexibility needs to be extended to thinking about providing year-round provision. The traditional three-term academic year may be especially inappropriate in this area of work. Unemployment is no respecter of the summer break. Particularly if programmes are to take seriously the idea that one of the functions of education for the adult unemployed may be to reproduce the temporal disciplines of work, thought should be given to the feasibility of making provision available throughout the year.

71. Related to this is the need to give attention to designing provision on a 'roll-on/roll-off' basis. People do not become unemployed at set times of the year, and they may not seek to join courses at set times either — as is the case with more conventional students. Nor can they necessarily commit themselves for a pre-determined period, unless they also opt to defer job search for the majority of this period — which most will not want, or be in a position, to do. Accordingly, many programmes have adopted a

'roll-on/roll-off' approach which allows individuals to join and to leave at times which suit their own individual needs. Modular courses — a feature of much MSC Adult Training Strategy provision relevant to unemployed people — may be an appropriate curricular strategy in this respect, making learning experiences available to learners in manageable units, structured so that learners can decide how many they wish to take and in which order.

72. PLANNING POINTS

- There may sometimes be good reasons for using off-site premises to attract learners who might find the institution's main site intimidating or difficult to get to: such premises should preferably be on 'neutral' territory.
- Unemployed people do not have a summer break from unemployment. Attention should accordingly be given to the feasibility of making provision available year-round.
- Unemployed people will not necessarily wish to join programmes at set times of the year. It may therefore be useful to give attention to designing provision on a 'roll-on/roll-off' basis.

73. **Theme Seven: Publicity**. At the initial stages of any initiative, considerable thought should be given to publicity. Unemployed people need to be made aware of the educational provision that is available, and to feel that it is 'for them'. This is true not only in relation to special provision but also in relation to 'in-fill' opportunities into existing provision.

> A survey of the unemployed found that the most powerful single deterrent was lack of self-confidence. 'In this the unemployed share the common anxieties of mature students, but the condition is heightened by the demoralising experiences of unemployment itself. Lack of confidence is compounded by a generally low level of educational achievement. This leads many to assume that they lack the basic qualifications and ability to join courses: that education is 'not for them'. Completing this vicious circle is lack of knowledge about what opportunities exist' (23, p.337).

> 'The problem of getting information to the unemployed is increased by their isolation. One ... younger man said that for nearly a year, before joining a 'second chance' course in a college of further education, he had seen no-one but his immediate family. Friends, neighbours and even near relatives avoided him and he avoided them, because they were embarrassed in each others' company. He felt he had dropped out of the real world' (22, p.2).

74. Publicity methods which have been used include:

- Posters and leaflets displayed at places likely to be attended by the unemployed or unwaged — such as job centres or centres for the unemployed.
- Feature articles in local newspapers.
- Mail shots.
- Spots on local radio.
- Illustrated beer mats in pubs and clubs.
- Displays in supermarkets etc.
- Door knocks.
- Contacting local employers reported as announcing redundancies.
- Attendance at meetings or seminars organised for unemployed people, for instance through PER or centres for the unemployed.
- Word of mouth — particularly unsolicited recommendations given by people already participating in programmes.

In general, the most successful of these appears to have been 'word of mouth'. Once an initiative has begun to acquire a good reputation, it may become quite easy to 'fill places'. Even before this, co-operation with other networks in the community — unemployed centres, social agencies, voluntary organisations, churches, etc. — can help to 'get people talking' (3, p.24). In the early days, however, an initiative cannot rely on this, and thought should be given to using some of the more 'active' publicity methods. This may also be the case if provision does not seem to be attracting a representative cross-section of the intended target group.

75. Thought should also be given to the presentation of the initiative. The wrong 'label' or the wrong style of presentation can discourage potential learners from initiatives which might in fact meet their needs very well.

> 'I don't use any terms like 'unwaged', 'unemployed', 'literacy' — the whole lot is just **out**. What we run is an adult education programme. As soon as you attach labels, the very people you're trying to attract — people with pride and ambition — are going to be turned away, turned off' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

On the other hand, some element of targetting may be important if the unemployed are going to feel that their distinctive needs are to be addressed. Sometimes, good presentation can overcome considerable initial reluctance.

> 'I went to PER, to the seminar. It was a waste of time — till J. came in and started talking about this programme. She was like a breath of fresh air — because she got up there and she believed what she was talking about. And I thought 'Yes, this is what I want'' (course participant, Case-Study D).

76. PLANNING POINTS

- Thought should be given to 'active' forms of marketing at the outset of any initiative — and wherever difficulties are being encountered in attracting the intended target group.
- Thought should also be given to the way the initiative is presented. The wrong 'label' chosen for a programme can be very off-putting.

(c) Implementation

77. **Theme Eight: Negotiation.** An emphasis on the 'negotiated curriculum' is an integral part of an approach where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. For this to happen, it is vital that the learner is actively involved in all important discussions affecting the direction of his or her learning. Such negotiation may take place at an individual or group level. For instance:

- Negotiation may take place at a group level at the outset of a programme for the unemployed.

> 'Many project workers stressed that the unemployed needed what they called a 'sorting out' period, which gave them time to assess themselves and their situation, and to experiment. This could be done through group discussion, with support and counselling, sometimes combined with educational 'sampling' where the group was based on a college or centre... In other instances, project workers used informal discussion as a means by which a group could be helped to define needs and develop an initial curricular approach' (22, p.23).

- Negotiation may take place at an individual level when the learner has to decide between different 'options' offered within a particular training programme.

> At Tile Hill College (Case-Study A), the Adult Preparation Training programme is offered on a 'modular' basis. When they join the programme, participants are familiarised with the range of options available and are helped to choose between them. This process may on occasion lead to the identification of gaps in the range of existing provision and hence to the design of new modules.

- Negotiation may take place at a group level at the particular course or session.

> Northern College (Case-Study C) offers a range of short courses to — amongst others — unemployed groups. These begin with a session in which group members express what they would wish to get out of the course. This is used to help tutors frame the particular sessions of the course and as a set of criteria against which to judge its success.

- Negotiation at either a group or individual level may then be needed at later stages in the course.

> In the Consett programme, it seemed clear that many students had difficulties in identifying clear educational goals at the outset, and that their educational experience led them into a process of modifying and clarifying their initial objectives. Thus although personal timetables were agreed after discussion between students and their personal tutors, the students were encouraged to regard the syllabus as a guidance framework within which considerable choice remained (17, pp.75, 83-84).

These examples are not meant to be exhaustive. In successful programmes, negotiation can be seen as a 'philosophy' which underlies all aspects of the curriculum. It implies a 'flexible' curriculum.

78. Whilst being essentially 'learner-centred', many workers are keen to describe negotiation as a two-way process. They reserve the right on occasion to disagree with learners over what they see as their 'needs'.

> 'I think there's nothing wrong in itself with working with those who are politically active **if** what they're then doing is learning. You have to decide what it is they need to learn, and what they need to learn may not be what they want to learn. I think in those cases we're quite justified in saying: 'We've identified the need, mate!'' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

> A report which in many other respects advocates a 'learner-centred' approach comments:
>
> 'The idea of relevance which has become fashionable in education in the last 20 years is of dubious value. There is a danger of producing a second class, second rate, practicalised, localised curriculum. Our approach struggles to integrate what people say they want with what it seems to us, as tutors and organisers, that they need. In the context of such an orientation, *King Lear* can be relevant' (19, pp.173-174).

The task for the tutor is one of presenting his or her views, but doing so in a way which recognises that ultimately decisions have to be made jointly with the learner. (The conceptual framework outlined in Section II may provide a useful framework for parts of this negotiation process.)

79. PLANNING POINTS

- For learners to take full responsibility for their own learning, it is necessary for them to be actively involved in decisions about the direction of their learning.
- Negotiation may be conducted on an individual or group basis, not just at the outset but throughout the programme.
- Negotiation is a two-way process — both the learner and the tutor may have significant views to contribute.

80. **Theme Nine: Learning/Teaching Methods.** Almost without exception, staff who have worked with groups of unemployed people talk about how they have found that their style of working must be one which takes as its central theme the idea of boosting the learner's confidence. For many, this begins with emphasising the differences between this learning experience and their memories of their days at school — which for some of them may be negative ones.

> 'You have to produce firm evidence that people aren't back in school. You have actually to demonstrate that actively and creatively' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

> 'Everybody who comes into our centre has had appalling educational experiences: in some cases partly through the fault of themselves and their parents, but more often than not through the fault of the schools and the teachers that they went to. In my view, they're **deeply** suspicious of any kind of educational institution' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

81. An important part of this process is that tutors should take steps to break down any 'barriers' between themselves and students which might suggest anything other than an adult-to-adult relationship.

> 'I don't feel that I'm successful until they can challenge me and say 'Why are we doing this', or 'I don't feel that we should be doing this'' (tutor, Case-Study A).

This does not mean suppressing one's own identity.

> 'Most students were quite prepared to accept class and cultural differences as long as these were not presented as being superior to their own working-class traditions' (17, p.104).

Successful tutors have, however, to challenge both their own expectations of their professional role and some of the expectations which students with little recent experience of formal learning situations may bring with them.

> 'It's very difficult as a teacher to adjust and control one's own expectations of what being a teacher is. It's very difficult **not** to be a conventional teacher — learners come in wanting you to be that. I try and switch that to be a kind of group leadership. I say 'I just happen to be working here and have resources available' — if they want to do something in particular, I have the resources and we can do it. That's how I see my job. It's only when you've gone through this demystifying process that people will open up, and discuss what they feel are their real needs' (tutor, Case-Study A).

Through encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning, it becomes possible for their general morale and level of confidence to be increased.

82. Although, in some areas of study, individual work has been found to be an important element in learner success, group work can have an important part to play in confidence building. Discussion is particularly valuable in this respect.

> 'Our students... preferred discussion to formal lectures. Adverse comments criticised the lack of discussion and not being able to join in because of time or too large numbers. The unemployed have a burning need to talk. Discussion makes it easier to ask questions. If everyone is talking there is less chance of appearing 'stupid'! Active learning methods — group work, exercises, role play — pay dividends here. Our students generally grew in confidence, feeling 'somebody' again, having their say and being listened to' (23, p.340).

As the tutor's role becomes identified as one of 'group facilitator' rather than 'instructor', students can come to realise how much they can learn from each other, and membership of the group can itself become a motivating factor.

> 'If you work on the assumption that in a well-run scheme students will learn more from each other than they ever will from a tutor, group work becomes vital as a basis. It also creates a solidarity which keeps them coming' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

Within the Bideford set of initiatives (Case-Study E), 'Skill Swop' exists as a drop-in centre where unemployed people may meet over a cup of coffee. Opportunities exist for Skill Swop users to join adult education classes offered by the community college, but this in practice is seen as a secondary aim of the initiative. The originator of the project had this to say about what users stood to gain from it:

'Knowing that the centre is open, and that there will be somebody there to welcome them. At the beginning, all we said we offered was cheap coffee, daily papers and somewhere to sit; and really and truthfully, I think that's the most important part of what we do. The other facilities are there, but you don't have to use them if you don't want to' (6, p.6).

87. In other initiatives where the main emphasis is on 'learning', it has been found necessary to evolve elaborate support mechanisms to ensure that learners gain sustained benefit from the educational provision.

In the Consett programme, each student was allocated to a tutor. They met them regularly — some on a group basis, some on a one-to-one basis. Some problems were experienced because the system appeared to students as an attempt to control their attendance and learning. Nonetheless, most students appreciated the helpfulness of the tutors, and their informality, relaxed style, patience and friendliness (17, pp.124-138).

The design of the 'Bridge' programme run by East Midlands Regional Management Centre and based at Trent Polytechnic (Case-Study D) was influenced by experience with a previous programme of courses aimed at the unemployed. These courses had been run intensively over a two-week period. It was found that many participants suffered a period of depression afterwards:

> 'The big draw-back was: they came for the two weeks and that was **it**. There was no back-up. They were back on their own again' (course tutor).

Accordingly, on the 'Bridge' programme — in addition to the formal course — participants have had access to a wide range of support, formal and informal, over a six-month period:

> 'It was like holding somebody's hand very tightly and suddenly letting go. With the Bridge programme it's much more gradual — and that's where the six months are important' (course administrator).

88. Such support may be put on a formal basis — by, for instance, identifying certain staff members as 'counsellors' and thereby building in time which is available specifically for support or guidance. Much valuable support, however, may be less visible and less formalised. It may come from various members of staff, and take a variety of forms.

'It is not possible to be didactic about this: counselling ought not to be cossetting; individual powers of adaptation and independence differ. On the other hand people who lack confidence and whose personal lives are beset with difficulties may need maximum support to help them sustain effort and motivation' (22, p.30).

'We had someone a long time ago. When he started with the programme he listened and worked quite hard. Then, suddenly, he didn't seem to do anything. He just came in and wandered around. He was a super person but nothing was really happening. This went on for a few days. So, I gave him a real rollicking. Told him he wasn't doing anything, he wasn't working, it was time he pulled his finger out. He went out looking hurt — I had hurt him. The following day the course tutor saw him. He didn't know I'd given him a real kick and had a talk with him. He softened it — he wasn't as hard with him as I had been. He could be, but he chose not to be on this occasion. He picked A. up — got him going again. So, it was a sort of combination thing. Within weeks A. got a job. He said to me: 'If you hadn't have kicked me I wouldn't have moved, and then C. picked me up at the right time'. So, it was a sort of blend' (course administrator, Case-Study D).

> 'It's a very low-level certificate — in employment terms, worthless. But the people who come aren't stupid — they know that even if they had 10 'O' levels, they wouldn't be guaranteed a job. It's a winner — it packs 'em in. It provides people with a focus for their work; it's the ideal goal at the end of a numeracy course. It keeps people coming week after week when otherwise they'd be flagging, because they have no job at the end. It only works that way for some people — other students are motivated differently' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

For such students, the argument continues, the right kind of certificate can provide both job satisfaction for staff and a visible confidence boost for participants.

> 'To see the look of joy on someone's face when they pass, when they've never passed anything else in their lives, is wonderful. And the change of self-image is remarkable — it actually gives some students the confidence to go out and look for work. I'm not saying it's the answer to the nation's ills, but for **some** students it both provides a focus for more study and, when they get it, a big boost in confidence' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

98. Whilst many tutors would be hostile to the idea, some senior staff have been discussing the possible value of introducing a certificate drawn up with the particular needs of unemployed/unwaged people in mind. One possible benefit from such a development would be that it could make higher education more accessible to learners who have been 'switched on' to education through provision aimed at their needs as unemployed people.

99. PLANNING POINTS

- Many staff believe that over-formal assessment of learner progress may undermine the emphasis placed on distinguishing provision for unemployed adults from their experiences of schooling.
- There is however broad agreement on the potential value of self-referenced formative assessment which enables learners to recognise the progress they have made from their individual starting-points.
- Staff have also found that, for certain students, working towards a certificate can provide a focus for success and a tangible boost in confidence.

100. **Theme Twelve: Monitoring.** Whatever the policy regarding individual assessment, there is a need to make more efforts to monitor the effectiveness of the programme as a whole. There is sometimes reluctance on the part of teachers to participate in an evaluation of the teaching/learning process, because they interpret such an activity either as a negative judgemental one which questions their professional competence, or as an interference in the teacher/learner relationship, undermining the process of confidence-building. If a new framework of educational provision is to be effective in fulfilling its aims, however, some process of recording, measuring and appraising what has taken place in the early stages must be carried out, and its outcomes used when decisions are made about future developments and improvements.

101. The evaluation process is likely to be most productive in this context if participants, teachers and managers are involved together in reviewing the activity in which they have been involved and in incorporating their findings into the design of the 'next-time-round' experience. Any data from individual assessments can be useful here. So can data on drop-out rates, though such data need to be interpreted very carefully. It is also often useful to distribute evaluation forms at the end of the programme or to hold a review session at which members are invited to voice their feelings about the programme and what they have learned from it. Monitoring/evaluation as part of the process of curriculum development is discussed further elsewhere (e.g. 7).

102. Not infrequently, the effectiveness of provision is evaluated in terms of the progression of students at the end of the programme. The issues here are by no means clear-cut. Within a curriculum built primarily around **coping** with unemployment, for example, 'progression' may be a totally inappropriate criterion. Unemployment will be accepted as a long-term condition, and the educational support provided may equally be seen as long-term and potentially open-ended. Initiatives which operate on a drop-in basis may reflect this orientation. Where, on the other hand, the curriculum focuses on fostering **escape** from unemployment, the concept of progression is likely to be an important and uncomplicated one — progression will be seen in terms of finding a job and as representing the most salient feature of the curriculum. The programme's effectiveness may well be

judged in terms of its placement rate. Finally, where the curriculum tries to treat unemployment as an **opportunity**, the concept of progression becomes much more multi-faceted, and may include:

- **Progression into job-specific training.** This is a feature of the pre-TOPS courses which are now being incorporated into the MSC's Adult Training Strategy.
- **Progression into self-employment or a co-operative venture**. There is a great deal of interest in this kind of progression — although in practice it seems so far to be happening only to a limited extent. There also seems to be growing interest in education supporting individuals while they make the jump from unemployment to new ways of earning a living. Amongst the case-studies presented in Section IV, a good example is provided by the plans for the Bideford Bakehouse project (Case-Study E).

Case-Study D provides the following set of 1984 figures as a testament to its effectiveness:

Full-time jobs	51.1%
Part-time jobs	12.8%
Self-employment	4.6%
Training courses	7.1%
'Not successful'	24.4%

It may also include:

- **Educational progression.** In particular, movement from basic educational provision aimed at the unemployed to more advanced 'mainstream' courses. A number of courses operating on an 'access' or 'return to study' basis have this as their main focus. Sometimes they have negotiated ways of facilitating this progression with other institutions — including polytechnics and universities.

'We're reasonably good at feeding people on — we've got three people who, we hope, are going to go on to teacher-training access courses at South Bank Poly. People go on to 'O' and 'A' level courses at Brixton College, and secretarial courses at Southwark College' (basic-education tutor), Case-Study B).

103. The adequacy of educational progression as an end in itself is an issue on which workers differ. Some are critical of the way in which the educational system often seeks to retain students and to encourage them to progress from one educational offering to another. They argue that with unemployed people the system should actively be seeking to 'lose' students to other forms of progression.

'I'm trying to get rid of people as fast as possible, but in a constructive way. Adult education, with its obsession with student numbers, is geared to keeping students as long as possible. Conventionally, we measure our success by how many students we have and how long we keep them. To me this attitude seems absolutely stupid. What we should measure is how quickly we can constructively get rid of them to wherever they want to go' (basic-education tutor, Case-Study B).

'There is a serious problem: what are the limits of education? There comes a stage when they have done all the courses. Where do they go then? University?' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

104. PLANNING POINTS

- Procedures are needed for recording and reviewing the development of provision, and for using such information in designing what is to happen 'next-time-round'.
- In monitoring the effectiveness of provision, fruitful use can be made of students' reactions to the programme, gathered through questionnaires or through review sessions.

- It is also useful to gain information on students' progression following the end of the programme, though the nature of what is desirable in terms of progression will vary according to the programme's objectives.

105. **Theme Thirteen: Staffing and Staff Development.** Many staff are themselves in need of support. Working with the unemployed can be hard and demanding. In part this can be due to the innovative nature of much of the work.

> 'It's hard work, you know. It's extra work and I know for a fact that people plan lessons together on the telephone at eleven o'clock at night and that sort of thing. It's the job of good management to create good lines of communication with staff so that if people do start feeling the strain, it's picked up and you see that they get the right support' (head of community education, Case-Study A).

The need for support may also reflect the paucity of resources for some of the initiatives, which among other things results in the employment of more part-time staff.

> 'One of the problems that adult education has is that, of course, it's poorly resourced. This may have some advantages in a way — it does mean that a lot of the staff have direct experience of being unemployed. A lot of the younger staff are not employed full-time. They're probably paid for about 12-15 hours a week, and work 30-35... The obvious problems are communication, information sharing, supporting people in the field — and they **need** support. They can feel guilty because they at last have **some** money and the people they're working with have none. Horrible! Staff can end up feeling very vulnerable' (curriculum co-ordinator, Case-Study B).

A further factor may be the demands made on tutors' time and emotions by the learner-support roles they have to play. The question of 'who supports the supporters?' is often not given the attention it deserves and requires.

106. Not all staff in a given institution may be suited to this kind of work. Some may find that their existing teaching experience does not stand them in good stead.

> 'I think a lot of teachers are afraid of adults. For a start, some of them may be more intelligent than they are. So they might find their equal. And I think that that really frightens them' (Skill Swop volunteer, Case-Study E).

Many staff point to the advantages of tutors who themselves have some experience of unemployment — both because they have some insight into the problems faced by unemployed people and because this can make it easier for learners to relate to them initially.

> 'I have been through redundancy myself, so I know the feelings of some of these people — like feeling that it's almost the end of the world, 'why have I been selected to be made redundant', 'the world is against me'. I think my experience helps in relating to these people, because if my knowledge of redundancy was purely academic, I don't think that I could understand all of the problems — not just of the individual, but those affecting the family also' (course tutor, Case-Study D).

There seems to be a need for at least a few staff with this kind of direct experience — they can then 'pave the way' for student acceptance of staff without such a background.

107. 'Mainstream' FE teachers who have come to teaching from an initial career in industry or commerce and who keep close links with their industrial sector may have distinctive resources to offer too. In particular, they can do much to help maintain the confidence of those who, once made redundant, may regard their own job-related skills as no longer useful or estimable. Such teachers will be able to acknowledge the worth of the person's skills and to help them to keep in touch with appropriate networks in the industrial sector they have left, both as a means of maintaining their self-identity and, in some instance, with a view to returning to work in that area of employment. Where it is not possible for unemployed people to return to jobs in the sector in which they originally worked, mainstream teachers should be in a position to demonstrate the transferability of skills into different contexts, whether in new forms of employment, or in other forms of work and community participation.

108. Whatever the background and experience of the staff, there is likely to be a need for staff development to enable them to share their experiences as the programme develops, to learn from each other, and to develop their skills. Such staff development can take a variety of forms, ranging from collaborative teaching to formal training courses.

> 'It is innovative work. Hence staff development is important... I think it goes on all the time and, just as there's such a thing as co-counselling, there's a lot of 'co-development'. A lot is informal. There's also exposing people to different teaching experiences. For example, we're now doing increasing amounts of team teaching... There is also a constant stream of requests from staff to go to meetings, conferences and courses, and so on... What staff development means is that senior management have to be available for bouncing ideas off and for support' (head of community education, Case-Study A).

109. It is important that staff development should itself develop into a programme, integrated with staff-support provision, and observing the same basic principle of a negotiated curriculum as in other areas of adult learning. Some of the topics which may be relevant to staff needs in this area include:

- The nature of unemployment and the needs of the unemployed.
- Individual-centred learning/teaching methods.
- Guidance and counselling skills.

110. **All** staff involved in work with the unemployed should have access to such staff-development provision. This should include staff who teach unemployed students on an 'in-fill' basis. It may also be fruitful for the programme to cover administrative as well as teaching staff.

> In preparing for the Dearne Valley project, Northern College (Case-Study C) have included all staff — including secretarial and administrative workers in the college office — in development meetings. This is seen as being particularly important because such staff are often the first point of contact for potential learners.

111. PLANNING POINTS

- The innovative nature of the work, and the way in which staffing resources may be tightly stretched, can lead to particular needs for staff support. Whether such needs have been adequately met should be an important factor in evaluating programmes and in ensuring their continued success.
- It is useful if at least some of the tutors have themselves had some experience of unemployment or redundancy.
- Attention is needed to staff development as a way of enabling staff to learn from their experience and to develop their skills. This should apply to **all** staff involved in the work.

112. **Theme Fourteen: Integration.** Particularly in large institutions — such as FE colleges — there is an ever-present danger with 'special initiatives' that in the eyes of some staff, and ultimately in the eyes of learners themselves, such projects may become marginalised and seen as peripheral to the mainstream or 'real' work of the institution. This problem has been experienced with other areas of work where the curriculum has differed significantly from that of existing work in the organisation. The Youth Training Scheme and work with the handicapped are two examples. Unemployed people may already carry a heavy enough stigma in some eyes, without educational provision adding to it.

> 'A big part of the department's work is with the handicapped. This is an area prone to 'ghetto-isation'. It's very easy for people to get labelled as doing low-level work and as 'those people who work in that funny unit at the end of the corridor'. I am determined that that will **not** happen with our unemployed work, and consequently I get people working across boundaries and at a range of levels' (head of community education, Case-Study A).

Two factors have been found to be associated with this problem of marginalisation:

- It is particularly likely to occur when initiatives take place on premises separate from the bulk of the institution's more 'traditional' provision.

> A feature of provision geared towards redundant steelworkers at Consett was that, after an initial start at the college's main premises, courses were run in a rural annexe, two miles from the main college site. This was seen as a major factor in the initiative's failure to survive the end of external funding:
>
> > 'The isolation of the annexe severely inhibited communication between the two groups of staff; in particular the ABE tutors failed to realise how the main college staff perceived their roles and functions. With the benefit of hindsight the course co-ordinator saw the separation from the main college as a major drawback: 'Yes. A mistake was made. We were content to be separate. Because we were self-contained there was no inter-change. The established staff did not take up the offer to get involved. Only one. The general attitude was against" (17, p.94).

- It is particularly likely to occur when work with the unemployed becomes associated with a particular group of staff.

> 'One of the management provisions I try to make is that nobody operates in just a single area. The consequence is that whilst someone may be primarily a horticulturist, some of his time each week may be spent with the unemployed' (head of community education, Case-Study A).

> 'In an FE college, if you have something new grafted on called 'work with the unemployed', very likely you second someone to be responsible for that. The involvement of the institution, because there's no sense in which it's continuous with the history and development of the institution, just doesn't happen. It's so-and-so's job. Now, there's no sense in which any one person here is 'working with the unemployed'. It's something which happens to be done by most of the staff here, and it's something which has a clear relationship to the rest of our work, because it's developed out of it in a very clear way' (short-course organiser, Case-Study C).

Strategies for achieving integration need to take account of these points.

113. In large institutions, programmes for the unemployed may include both special initiatives and 'in-fill' provision. This has the potential advantage of easing educational progression within the institution and of allowing staff from different areas to learn from each other's experience. A potential danger, however, is that the two aspects of provision may not be seen by institutional staff as being part of one programme. Curriculum managers need to be sensitive to this danger, and to find ways of avoiding it.

114. PLANNING POINTS

- In reviewing provision, attention should be paid to the question of whether or not it appears to be well integrated with other provision offered by the host institution. Failure to do this could add to the already heavy stigma perceived by some unemployed people.
- Integration is much more difficult to achieve where programmes for the unemployed are based away from the institution's main site or are associated with a particular group of staff.

Curriculum Planning Check-List

115. The Curriculum Planning Check-List summarises the main points discussed in this section and is intended as a practical aid to programme developers.

CURRICULUM PLANNING CHECK-LIST

In this institution:

	(Tick as appropriate) Yes	No	Not relevant
(a) Principles and Policies			
Theme One: Values and Principles			
• Agreement has been reached about the intended value of the provision to potential learners	( )	( )	( )
• Consideration has been given to the socio-political stance of the provision	( )	( )	( )
• The specific objectives of the provision have been clarified	( )	( )	( )
• Attention has been given to the importance of 'confidence- raising'	( )	( )	( )
Theme Two: Constraints			
• Attention has been given to the possibility of 're-prioritising' existing budgets to support work with the unemployed	( )	( )	( )
• The possibility of seeking additional funds for such provision has been considered	( )	( )	( )
• The restraints on the curriculum imposed by the criteria for external funding have been examined	( )	( )	( )
• The extent to which the provision is able to take on board political issues raised by the work has been clarified	( )	( )	( )
Theme Three: Collaboration			
• Attention has been paid to the need to established collaborative links with other local providers in order to meet the diversity of learner needs	( )	( )	( )
• Collaboration between statutory and voluntary sectors has been explored	( )	( )	( )
• Appropriate links have been established with other providers to assist student progression	( )	( )	( )
(b) Design			
Theme Four: Target Groups			
• A satisfactory working definition of 'the unemployed' has been reached	( )	( )	( )
• Decisions have been made as to who, amongst the unemployed, provision will be geared towards	( )	( )	( )

	(Tick as appropriate) Yes	No	Not relevant
Theme Five: Identifying Learner Needs			
• Efforts have been made to elicit the views of unemployed people on their educational needs	( )	( )	( )
• Statistics on the local labour market have been collated and consulted	( )	( )	( )
Theme Six: Location and Timing			
• Consideration has been given to the costs and benefits of mounting provision 'off-site'	( )	( )	( )
• Serious attention has been given to the desirability of providing a year-round programme	( )	( )	( )
• The relevance of a 'roll-on/roll-off' approach has been investigated	( )	( )	( )
Theme Seven: Publicity			
• Attention has been given to 'active' forms of publicity	( )	( )	( )
• An appropriate 'label' has been chosen for the programme	( )	( )	( )
(c) **Implementation**			
Theme Eight: Negotiation			
• Steps have been taken to involve participants actively in decisions about their learning	( )	( )	( )
• The relevance of negotiation throughout the programme has been recognised	( )	( )	( )
• Negotiation is seen as a two-way process	( )	( )	( )
Theme Nine: Learning/Teaching Methods			
• Steps have been taken to distinguish the learning situation from participants' memories of schooling	( )	( )	( )
• The need to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning has been recognised in the choice of teaching/learning methods	( )	( )	( )
• Tutors have considered the potential of group work for motivating learners	( )	( )	( )
• Tutors have developed ways of contributing actively to students' learning as part of an adult-to-adult relationship	( )	( )	( )
Theme Ten: Learner Support			
• Attention has been given to the provision of guidance and support	( )	( )	( )
• The value of informal support has been recognised	( )	( )	( )

	(Tick as appropriate) Yes	No	Not relevant
• Steps have been taken to ensure that organisational arrangements are sensitive to the economic and other constraints on learners	( )	( )	( )
• Particular attention has been given to the support needs of 'in-fill' students	( )	( )	( )
• Ways have been developed for helping students to decide where to move on to, and for offering continuing support if appropriate	( )	( )	( )
(d) **Evaluation and Development**			
Theme Eleven: Assessment and Accreditation			
• Consideration has been given to the danger that any formal learner assessment incorporated in the programme may give students the impression that they are 'back at school'	( )	( )	( )
• The value of self-referenced feedback to learners has been recognised	( )	( )	( )
• Attention has been given to the potential costs and benefits of certification	( )	( )	( )
Theme Twelve: Monitoring			
• Procedures have been set up for recording and reviewing the development of provision, and for using this information in designing future provision	( )	( )	( )
• Provision has been made for gathering student reactions to the programme	( )	( )	( )
• Information will be obtained on student progression	( )	( )	( )
Theme Thirteen: Staffing and Staff Development			
• Arrangements have been made to provide staff with adequate support	( )	( )	( )
• Some tutors have themselves had experience of unemployment or redundancy	( )	( )	( )
• A programme of staff development has been linked to the provision and includes all staff involved in the work	( )	( )	( )
Theme Fourteen: Integration			
• Attention has been given to the integration of the programme with the other work of the institution	( )	( )	( )
• Arrangements have been made to ensure that the staff involved in the work feel they belong to the host institution	( )	( )	( )

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SECTION IV: CASE-STUDIES

116. In this final section, the five case-studies drawn upon in the body of the manual are presented in outline form. Each outline ends with cross-references to places in earlier sections where particular facets of the programme have been covered in more detail. It is not suggested that the case-studies are 'typical' or 'representative' in any way. But, as examples of 'good or interesting practice', they may stimulate practitioners in the field by illustrating what is possible.

Case-Study A: Tile Hill College, Coventry

117. Tile Hill is a college of further education on the western edge of Coventry. The college's now considerable involvement in provision for unemployed adults can be traced to the major upsurge in unemployment in the city during 1980, when the unemployment rate rose from 7% to approximately 16% (the level at which it seems to have stabilised). In response to this, the college governors authorised the principal to set up a 'hardship fund' — contributed to by trades unions — to help the unemployed come on ordinary courses.

118. Activity within the college was further stimulated during 1981-83 by an FEU-funded project which allowed the college to research into the educational needs and wants of the unemployed in the area (12). This allowed a first batch of more 'tailored' courses to get off the ground. Particular attention was paid to timing the courses and supporting them with creches etc. so as to make them accessible to the unemployed. Since then, a broader programme of courses for the unemployed has been funded by the MSC, and much of it has now come under the aegis of the MSC's Adult Training Strategy.

119. Present provision can be divided into two categories: courses specifically geared towards the unemployed (now exclusively MSC-funded), and courses which — as the principal put it — 'by their nature and structure attract the unemployed'. The courses in operation in early 1985 were:

(a) **MSC-funded**

(i) A **TOPS Course** to train Medical Secretaries. This course finished in March 1985.

(ii) A **Pre-TOPS 'Breakthrough' Course** for a group of 25. This course lasts 20 hours per week over 18 weeks, and concentrates on basic skills One route through it includes English as a Second Language.

(iii) A **Business Skills Workshop**. A 15-hours-a-week course over 8 weeks, this workshop aims at updating the adult unemployed in modern office technology, but also includes some elements of basic skills. The course has included an optional module on self-employment, which has now been incorporated into the Adult Preparation Training programme (see (v) below), and has become a popular option.

(iv) **New Skills Courses**. These 20-hours-a-week courses over 14 weeks are as much 'tasters' as 'training', and include periods at each of the other two FE colleges in Coventry. The areas covered have included retailing, floristry, motor-vehicle maintenance, building and construction, and leisure and recreation-related jobs (e.g. groundsmanship).

(v) **Adult Preparation Training**. This is funded through the Adult Training Strategy and uses a 'modular' approach. It was originally piloted by providing training for individuals on the Community Programme. It has been running as a fully-fledged ATS initiative since April 1985, when there were about 40 participants pursuing a variety of modules. Participants have a free choice as to which and how many modules they will pursue, but something approaching a 'core' of options which staff steer participants towards seems to be emerging: this has the additional effect of maintaining some sense of group identity. A condition of funding is that Tile Hill should achieve a 60% placement rate from this course into either paid employment or further education/training.

(b) **General courses which attract the unemployed**

(i) An 18-hour course over 24 weeks in **Computer Programming**. This has 80 participants, the majority of whom are 'non- employed'. A difficulty with this course is that whilst the LEA allows a percentage remission of course fee, the examination fee is a hefty one and some unemployed participants choose not to take the exam.

(ii) An **Open-Access Course**. This 20-hours-a-week course over one year is modelled on courses run in London which seek to attract ethnic minorities and act as a 'bridge' into higher education. Tile Hill have adapted this philosophy to the needs of the unemployed.

(iii) A day-time **Floristry** course. A one-day-a-week course over one year, with a significant number of unemployed participants.

The provision is however extremely dynamic — the picture changes almost from week to week

120. There are different target groups for the different courses. For example, the access course is aimed at a 'more academically able' clientele than the basic-education courses. In general, however, the target group is defined in fairly broad terms — the phrase used at Tile Hill is the 'non-employed' — though the MSC ensures that it is those holding a UB40 who benefit from the courses it sponsors. There is some suspicion that in practice the college tends to attract a disproportionate number of unemployed people of 'good' academic ability: efforts are being made to counter this.

121. The structure of the programme varies a great deal:

> 'It depends on the programme you've enrolled in. Let's take three examples. If you're on the Business Skills Workshop, the core of what everybody does is Office Skills, using office materials, keyboard skills, that sort of thing — with an 'as needed' for English as a Second Language or Communication Skills. If on the other hand you do pre-TOPS that will be largely basic skills. You'll be doing a lot of individual programme work. You'll be in a group of twelve — sometimes a group of six — and a lot of the time effectively in a group of one. On the Community Programme you'll spend the first two months on a core-skills programme in a group which we've found has an important support function. From then on, you'll meet in the same group for one or two hours a week with a tutor. The rest of your day's entitlement may take place at any time of the week. You'll be doing it largely on an in-fill basis. You may do things which you find difficult — this is where the support of the group is important' (head of community education).

122. Guidance and counselling are regarded as being extremely important in this respect:

> 'What is specifically geared to the unemployed is not so much the syllabus but an almost 'extra-curricular' provision to do with guidance and counselling which says 'Yes, you go along — that what's right for you'. It's not a course where people are 'ghettoised' and put into a group of people who are unemployed. You're put into a course on whatever's right' (head of community education).

123. There are a few members of staff, mostly course tutors, who spend a large proportion of time working with the unemployed; but none of them spent all their time on this work. In general, the policy has been to avoid having a specialist group dealing with the unemployed but rather to spread the work as widely as is practicable amongst the college staff.

(References to Case-Study A in earlier sections appear in paras. 7, 20, 23, 29, 33, 42, 45, 58, 62, 63, 77, 81, 84, 105, 108 and 112).

Case-Study B: Southwark Institute of Adult Education, London

124. Southwark is an institute of adult education serving an area which displays most of the symptoms of inner-city deprivation to be found in Britain during the 1980s. The borough extends from Bermondsey in the north to more prosperous 'leafy Dulwich' in the south. Ethnically, the borough is very diverse — the institute has students who between them have over 50 mother tongues. Over 20% of students at the institute belong to an ethnic minority, whilst 11% do not have English as their first language.

125. Unemployment in the borough as a whole was running at over 20% in early 1985, and was substantially higher than this in all parts bar Dulwich. Associated with this are high incidences of all the usual inner-city correlates of high unemployment, such as drug mis-use, violent crime and vandalism. These are at their worst in the vast 'modern' housing estates in the north of the borough.

126. The institute itself is spread out over a number of branches throughout the borough. The institute 'map' lists 19 sites, but one member of staff estimated that if **all** the premises used by the institute were totted up, the number would be 130! The institute has quite close relationships with a number of other institutions — notably the Borough Council (which is actually the biggest employer in Southwark) and Southwark College — and is a member of 'The Open College of South London'.

127. Among the initiatives being undertaken by the institute which are aimed specifically (to a greater or lesser extent) at the unemployed are:

(a) **Tabard Estate**. This is a basic education programme providing teaching/tuition in basic maths and basic English, with some developmental courses for women. In early 1985 there were about 50 students, most of whom were women. The programme operates on an open-access basis — there is at least one member of staff present all the time. Students may come in at any time which suits them. The scope runs from very basic literacy/numeracy skills to 'O' level standard. A large number of the students are enrolled for City and Guilds and RSA certificates.

(b) **North Peckham Estate**. On the face of it, a sister initiative to (a). In practice, although the objective is again to run adult basic-education and general classes, the techniques and approaches adopted are very different. The programme — which has only part-time staff — adopts an outreach approach, running courses on premises hired (indeed often made habitable) specifically for the purpose.

(c) **Pre-Vocational Course for Sports Leaders**. This initiative was originally aimed entirely at the unemployed, although in the event about half of the students have already been in employment. The course leads to the Central Council for Physical Recreation's Sports Leaders Award and prepares students for a City and Guilds 778 course leading to a recognised professional qualification for sports organisers run at Southwark College. It has been very successful in helping students into jobs.

(d) **'Sunrise' Course**. This is an ESL (English as a Second Language) initiative which seeks to help unwaged individuals from ethnic minorities to look at the skills involved in setting up small businesses — especially co-operatives — or entering self-employment. The intention has been to provide for an ESL audience a parallel course to those run by the Co-operative Development Agency for 'English' students. The course lasts two terms, and at the time of our visits had been run once with low numbers: it was about to be run for a second time.

(e) **Return to Learning through Fashion**. Another relatively new programme, this has so far attracted only women, and of the 13 who started the course (which runs for two days a week for a year), only two did not belong to ethnic minorities. It is based on the standard City and Guilds fashion course, but is also used as a means for teaching basic numeracy skills, literary skills, etc.

Other initiatives include an 'Art Foundation Course', an 'Introduction to Community Work', and 'Fresh Start Courses for Women'. In all, over 350 students have been involved in these initiatives.

128. These specific initiatives do **not**, however, represent the only or even the main use which the unemployed make of the institute's resources. A recent in-house survey showed that almost exactly 10% of the students in the 'mainstream' provision (i.e. 1,300 out of 13,000) were unemployed.

129. The Southwark programmes attach heavy priority to work with ethnic minorities and with women:

> 'I think it's firstly because being in ILEA and within the GLC area a high profile is being given to equal opportunities. Secondly, like a lot of areas similar to Southwark, everybody — well, large sections of the population — are getting a raw deal, and women and black people are coming right down the bottom of the raw deal. Thirdly, I think adult education tends to employ women who are going to take a stand on this issue. Yes, there is a strong emphasis on women in the institute — more than you'd get in a science department in a college, for instance' (curriculum co-ordinator).

130. The institute has a long-standing tradition of working with students on an individual basis and trying to be sensitive to the individual's particular needs. This is seen as having stood the institute in good stead in its work with the unemployed:

> 'It's the foundation stone of adult education in general — it has to be. Also in the particular context of work with the unemployed, because one of the things which goes very quickly is your sense of self — speaking as someone who has signed-on quite a lot in the last year or so. I think that the adult education sector has recognised the importance of negotiation and an individual-based approach for a very, very long time...' (curriculum co-ordinator).

131. Counselling is seen as an area of provision which is particularly important in this work. The institute provided the initial funding for, and continues to fund, the Southwark Education and Training Shop, which provides pre-entry advice and counselling from shop-front premises in one of the busiest streets in the borough. Counselling has also traditionally been a major strength of 'English as a Second Language' provision, but the need is now being recognised for staff development to improve the counselling skills of all staff working with the unemployed.

132. Provision for the unemployed is not 'ghetto-ised' within the institute. Indeed, this provision dove-tails well with the institute's overall priorities and existing expertise, and is not be seen in isolation from the mainstream of provision. There are unlikely to be any staff who have not had at least a few unemployed students in their classes, although some staff give their work with the unemployed more salience than do others.

(References to Case-Study B in earlier sections appear in paras. 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 26, 30, 31, 54, 58, 60, 62, 65, 69, 75, 80, 82, 88, 97, 102, 103 and 105).

Case-Study C: Northern College

133. Northern College is located three miles outside Barnsley. It was established in 1978, and is funded partly by the Department of Education and Science and partly by a consortium of local authorities as, in a sense, the 'Ruskin College of the North' — providing residential education relating to trade-union or broadly 'labour movement' issues. It differs from other such colleges (e.g. Ruskin, Coleg Harlech) in providing a mixture of long courses (one or two years) and short courses (between 2 days and 6 weeks), with each of these two elements regarded as equally important. Long-course students are recruited nationally; in contrast, the short courses are largely local community-oriented — seeking to help local communities is an important commitment on the part of the college.

134. The short-course programme has two elements: trade-union courses which are effectively bought from the college; and short courses run with funding from nearby local authorities. With regard to the latter, although the college prospectus lists the titles of short courses which are available through the college, students are not simply recruited to fill available places. Instead, recruitment is normally of existing groups (e.g. WEA, TUC unemployment centres, non-TUC unemployment centres, 'return to study' groups) who come into the college for a residential component as part of their existing 'course' or learning experience. An important strand of the programme is that it should have an impact in the participating groups' communities over and above the residential experience of individual participants.

135. The college's work with the unemployed has arisen out of this responsiveness to community needs. It started with a one-week course on 'Understanding Unemployment' run as part of a ten-week local-authority course. This one-week course has been run regularly for five years, though the South Yorkshire WEA — which has now established quite a diverse programme of work through local unemployment centres — has basically taken over the 'partner' role pioneered by the local authorities. The college now also runs a two-week follow-on 'Understanding Unemployment' course. In early 1985, the two-week course was being run roughly once a term, and the one-week version about twice a term. These courses are almost entirely organised through the unemployment centres which are sponsored by the Trades Union Congress, by local authorities, or occasionally by voluntary organisations (e.g. churches).

136. The nature of the 'Understanding Unemployment' courses has shifted somewhat:

> 'In the early stages people from unemployment centres were campaigning against unemployment... Now the constituency has changed slightly: they're a much less self-selecting minority of activists than they were in the early days — they are now much more representative... And there's an increasing minority amongst the people we see — who of course are a self-selecting minority — who say: 'Unemployment isn't so bad, it's being unwaged that's the problem: you don't get paid. I've got lots of things to say. I'm starting to secure some esteem from the voluntary organisations I'm involved in. People now respect me because I'm involved in this, that and the other. I've now got a role in life again, and I feel reasonably happy about things — all I'm worried about is money'. Now that's a psychological consequence that for us was totally unanticipated' (short-course organiser).

137. There has therefore been some shift from 'campaigning' to wider goals, although campaigning is still seen as a significant element of the college's work with the unemployed. It is certainly an important part of some courses which are not aimed specifically at the unemployed, but which attract significant numbers of the unemployed. For although 'Understanding Unemployment' is the only short course which is labelled 'work with the unemployed', there are other courses in which they take part. Notable amongst these are:

- 'Return to Study' — a second chance programme.
- A 'Community Activists Course'.
- 'Organising Your Community Group'.

In addition, some of the long-course students each year choose to include in their studies a project related to the issue of unemployment.

138. A further recent initiative has been the establishment, in close collaboration with the South Yorkshire WEA, of a project in the nearby Dearne Valley (11). The area has had high unemployment for a long time, and has traditionally had very poor provision for further and adult education. The main objective of the project is to get unemployed people in the Dearne to make more use of educational facilities — in particular those available through Northern College. REPLAN funding has been used to appoint a full-time worker who is working basically on an outreach basis, contacting existing community groups. Some progress has been made with three miners' wives support groups, who are beginning to explore what educational provision might be able to offer them. The WEA would like to see at least one branch established in the valley as a long-term product of the project.

139. In general, work with the unemployed is seen by the staff as being a central concern of the college:

> 'In some colleges, if you have something new grafted on called 'work with the unemployed', you very likely second someone to be responsible for it. The involvement of the institution, because there's no sense in which it's continuous with the history and development of the institution, just doesn't happen. It's so-and-so's job. Now, there's no sense in which P. (the Dearne Valley field worker) is the only person here working with the unemployed. It's something that is done by most of the staff here and it's something which has a clear relationship to the rest of the work, because it's developed out of it in a very clear way.'

(References to Case-Study C in earlier sections appear in paras. 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, 36, 49, 52, 60, 62, 77, 78, 80, 84, 95, 103, 110 and 112).

Case-Study D: East Midlands Regional Management Centre

140. The involvement of the East Midlands Regional Management Centre in work with the unemployed began when it ran a 're-employment assistance programme' for managers made redundant by Raleigh Industries. Building on this experience, the EMRMC worked with the MSC to develop the 'Bridge' programme which aims to help unemployed managers back into viable employment. In addition to the programme based at Trent Polytechnic Management Centre, which forms the focus of this case-study, EMRMC also runs similar — but not identical — programmes in Derby and Chesterfield. So far, over 600 people have been through the Nottingham course since 1982. Courses start roughly once every month, each with approximately 25 participants. Ten courses were being run during 1985/86.

141. EMRMC also run other related courses for the MSC, including:

(a) A **Management Extension Programme** — whereby small businesses are provided, free of charge, with an (unemployed) consultant to work for three months on a particular project for the firm (sometimes a short extension is granted). The main pay-off for the programme is seen as the help given to small businesses, but the 'consultants' have been known to get permanent jobs with the companies. This programme is run in Derby and Lincoln, and about 40 people have been involved in it over a period of 18 months: about one-third have been kept on by the companies with which they had worked.

(b) **Small-Business/Self-Employment Courses**. A range of short courses have been designed to help people thinking about self-employment to set up and develop their businesses on sound lines. There are some 700 places on such EMRMC courses on various sites throughout the East Midlands. Most are for people who are already fairly clear about their product or service, but who want help with running an effective business.

142. The emphasis of the 'Bridge' course is very much on job-seeking. In these terms it is extremely successful. Figures for 1984 show that over 75% of participants gained entry either to employment or to full-time training courses within their six-month 'funded' period. The programme starts with a five-day course on self-assessment, preparation of *curricula vitae* and interviewing skills. Thereafter, there is a six-month support period during which course participants have access to counselling, to seminars and workshops, to a common room containing information on job vacancies, and to typing and photocopying facilities for job applications. It is up to the individual to decide how much use he or she makes of these facilities. Out-of-pocket expenses to and from the centre are paid during this period.

143. The programme is open to anyone who is 25 years old or over, is unemployed, and is qualified to register with PER Most of the participants are male and white: they are however seen as reflecting a balanced cross-section of those eligible.

144. The basic principle of the programme is very much that of getting participants back into employment — the message being that they will have to work hard to achieve this. The intention is to reproduce some of the disciplines and routines of working life:

> 'Job hunting has to become a job in itself. They have to organise their time and resources to achieve their objective — getting a job. It's no good waiting for someone to knock on the door and say 'here's a job' — that just won't happen' (course administrator).

It is also notable in this respect that the course is for managers and is based in a Management Centre offering services such as secretarial support which 'may be sadly missed when these people are out of work'. The structure thus has the effect of sustaining a 'managerial' reference group.

145. All participants are entitled to personal 'counselling'. There is a list of 20-25 'counsellors' who are available. Most are Polytechnic staff 'bought in' by EMRMC, although very occasionally the programme will use outsiders with particular expertise. The role is one of helping participants to work through and resolve their work-related problems. Counsellors may spend time assisting with CV writing or interview practice, or more generally helping the programme participants to rebuild their confidence. The counsellors may also have a good knowledge of the area of employment which attracts the course member and may therefore give advice, for instance, on where a 'cold call' might be successful. Programme members are encouraged to divide their five-hour entitlement between a number of counsellors — picking up different advice from a number of sources. In practice, they vary a good deal over the extent to which they use the facility: one of those we spoke to had used 8-9 hours; another had used 45 minutes.

146. There is some interest in adapting the programme to suit new target groups — e.g. blue-collar workers, undergraduates — though it is recognised that major modifications might be needed: CVs, for example, would not be important for blue-collar workers. There is also some concern about the effectiveness of dealing with the redundant person in isolation from his or her family:

> 'The one thing I would like to do — and I've wanted to do ever since we ran Bridge — is to run a seminar for the wives, or the partner, of the people who were on Bridge. So that they become aware of what it's like for their partners, and what they could do to help. Very simple things, but things they've

never thought of, so they could give their husband or wife understanding and encouragement when it counts' (course administrator).

(References to Case-Study D in earlier sections appear in paras. 20, 23, 29, 42, 49, 60, 75, 87, 88, 102 and 106).

Case-Study E: Bideford School and Community College, North Devon

147. Bideford is an example of an attractive holiday-trade town which demonstrates many of the features of a depressed rural economy. In the college's catchment area of 100 square miles, population density is roughly equivalent to one person per acre. Approximately two-thirds of the population live in Bideford itself — although the catchment area extends over 15 miles to the west. Unemployment is high and much affected by seasonal variation: during the winter months, unemployment has run as high as 25%, but there is roughly a drop of 10% during the peak of the summer holiday/tourist season. For those in employment, wages are well below the national average.

148. The rural nature of the area has a significant influence on the organisation of local education provision. The nearest FE college is in Barnstaple — some nine miles to the east. Adult education is available locally through Bideford School and Community College, and the college has provided the focus for the provision which has grown up geared towards the adult unemployed in the town. Many aspects of this family of initiatives are discussed in a recent publication (6) co-edited by the college adult tutor.

149. 'Skill Swop' was the first of these initiatives. It originated in 1981 when local people began to approach the adult tutor with the idea that the community college might do something for the unemployed. The title of the project was adopted following contact with the Cwmbran Skill Swop scheme (see 6, pp.29-33), although skills-exchange has never been the prime focus of activity — 'cheap coffee and a place to chat' have been the main services on offer.

150. Skill Swop is based in the Arts Centre, a building which belongs to the community college and is situated next to the Post Office where the unemployed collect their GIROs. It started operation on a volunteer basis in February 1982 on a two-day-per-week basis. It grew rapidly and at the start of 1983 became funded by the MSC Community Programme, with the County Council acting as managing agent. At its peak, in this form, it had a staff of four: a full-time organiser, two part-time crafts organisers and a social activities organiser. CP funding has now ended, but Skill Swop continues on a voluntary basis, still under the college's aegis.

151. One idea behind Skill Swop was that through their involvement with the coffee bar, unemployed people might be encouraged to make use of the centre's facilities and resources and also, perhaps, to take part in 'mainstream' classes organised by the college. Both of these things **have** happened, although to a lesser extent than the instigators had envisaged. Fairly extensive use of the centre's crafts and arts facilities has been made, but has been hampered by the perceived need, on the part of other staff using the centre, for the unemployed to be supervised.

152. Again, a minority of Skill Swop users have taken adult education courses. These have been available to Skill Swop 'card holders' at a concessionary rate of £5 as opposed to £30. However, the adult tutor believes that this concessionary system has been open to abuse. He points to middle-class housewives registering with Skill Swop just to get the concession and never again appearing at the Arts Centre (most evening classes are held at the college's main site). He estimates that about a quarter of **real** Skill Swop users have taken advantage of the concession — they have always been a small minority of course participants.

153. 'Bullseye', essentially a sister programme to Skill Swop with broadly the same aims and philosophy, is based at the nearby youth centre. It is aimed at a younger target audience.

154. The Bideford-based initiative which has attracted the most outside publicity has been the Bakehouse project, which has grown out of Skill Swop. Originally, Skill Swop had the Arts Centre mainly to itself. By spring 1983, however, a YTS art and design scheme was also in place at the centre, and competition for space was quite high. It was noticed that a large nearby warehouse which had been derelict for about 15 years was available for lease. Could the 'Skill Swop group' find some use for the 3,000 square feet of space which was potentially available? An open meeting, attended by about 35 people — including many unemployed — was called to discuss the idea. Thus the 'Bakehouse' project (the building was once a bakery cum tea-rooms) was born and the ideas for what the building could become began to take shape.

155. In essence the project was conceived as having two stages:

(a) Phase One: a **conversion operation**, which in the event has been funded through the Community Programme, which lasted (with extension) about a year and a quarter, and which involved putting the building into a sound state of repair, installing electricity for light and power, extending water services, and doing conversion and decoration work to fit the building for its intended purpose.

(b) Phase Two: a **launching operation**, if possible with some external funding, lasting about three years. This stage would involve unemployed people practising their crafts in the building and being helped to develop these skills, through some training, with a view to becoming self-employed. During this stage some core funding would be supplemented by proceeds from a coffee bar housed in the building and from the sale of goods produced at the Bakehouse, the ultimate aim being for the project to become totally self-supporting.

Things got off the ground when the Dartington North Devon Trust took out the lease on the building. The trust itself pays 33% of the rent and uses space in the building to house a YTS ITeC project. Phase One of the project was completed during the spring of 1985 — the unemployed people to carry out the CP phase of the work were recruited from amongst Skill Swop regulars.

156. At the time of writing, Phase One of the project had ended with no firm commitment from funding agencies regarding Phase Two. An application for core funding to the Development Programme of the Voluntary Projects Programme (VPP) was rejected too late for an application to the mainstream VPP, and an application to NIACE for REPLAN funding was also rejected after many months of delay. No decision had yet been reached on an application for Community Programme funding originally lodged with MSC at the end of 1984. On the bright side, support from the European Social Fund had been confirmed, with a view to providing training for unemployed young people seeking self-employment, and the project had secured grants from a number of trust funds for capital expenditure. In the absence of external support, volunteer and unemployed members of the committee staged a successful opening exhibition, which led to applications for space in the building from would-be self-employed craftsmen. The project also won DHSS approval for a scheme which allows unemployed craftsmen to earn money from sales of their work without loss of benefit, provided the income is banked by the Bakehouse (as a registered charity) and later used for employment-specific purposes.

157. The adult tutor has described the objectives of this second phase of the project:

> 'In the largest first-floor room, there would be an up-market tearoom and gallery, with further display space downstairs. At one end of the scale, the unemployed person with time hanging heavy could use the equipment to brush-up a skill simply to pass the time, buying his materials from us at cost and selling his goods through us for the benefit of the building so that we could keep it open for him or her. The earnings rule knocked out much more than that. At the other end, the professional or the gifted amateur could use our display and gallery space as a sales outlet, with the Bakehouse taking a commission on sales. Alternatively, he or she could hire our equipment at the market rate to gain the holiday season advantage of a working studio and sales point in the heart of a tourist centre.
>
> 'In between, the unemployed man or women trying to make the leap into self-employment could test the market without having to invest in capital equipment, while still having a ready sales outlet. The earnings rule would still be a problem: this way off the dole queues is a narrow one, so long as the would-be self-employed man can't earn more than £4.00 a week without loss of benefit. But ... we are forming a charity in the hope that all such earnings go into the charity which will run the building, so that in time the charity can later grant-aid the craftsman with his own money, whenever he has enough to set up on his own' (6, pp.41-42).

The intention is therefore to provide a physical base from which unemployed people can be encouraged to explore the option of self-employment.

(References to Case-Study E in earlier sections appear in paras. 9, 23, 24, 48, 52, 86 and 106).

APPENDIX A: FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

This manual has drawn on a range of recent publications on educational provision for the adult unemployed. These publications fall into three main groups:

- Reviews of existing provision for the adult unemployed. Three general reviews are particularly helpful in this respect: those by ACACE (3), by Charnley *et al.* (9), and by McDonald (22).
- Surveys of the adult unemployed to elicit their educational needs (e.g. 12; 19; 23).
- Accounts of particular programmes for the adult unemployed (e.g. 1; 6; 11; 12; 17; 19; 27; 28). The account of the Consett project by Holmes and Storrie (17) is especially perceptive and thought-provoking.

A useful general manual on self-help learning groups is that by Falshaw (10).

Learning materials for use with the unemployed are being developed by the Community Education Section of the Open University's Centre for Continuing Education. An account of the background to the development of the materials is provided by Senior (26). The materials are to take the form of 50 four-page topic leaflets organised under eight themes:

- Survival
- Social support
- Unemployment in context
- Self-assessment
- Acting on unemployment: personal change
- Acting on unemployment: work
- Acting on unemployment: groups
- Action plan

Each includes a variety of active-learning exercises. Audio-cassettes are being developed to provide illustrative case-study material and to demonstrate how relevant skills can be acquired and applied. Further details are available from: Barbara Senior, Community Education, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.

APPENDIX B: MSC PROVISION FOR THE ADULT UNEMPLOYED

From July 1985, the Manpower Services Commission has grouped its training schemes for adults into two programmes:

- The **Wider Opportunities Training Programme** — aimed at helping unemployed people who lack basic skills and confidence to improve their work-related skills, retain employability and cope with the changing content of jobs and work.
- The **Job Training Programme** — aimed at helping to meet local employment needs, and the creation and growth of business.

One part of the Wider Opportunities Training Programme is concerned with helping long-term unemployed people while they are temporarily employed in the MSC's Community Programme. The other part consists of a variety of courses designed to improve and maintain the employability of unemployed people:

COURSE PLANNING CATEGORY	*EXAMPLE TARGET POPULATION*	*CONTENT RANGE*	*EXAMPLE COURSE STRUCTURE*
TRANSFER OF EMPLOYMENT	-wide range of trainees -generally people needing remotivating and refreshing in their search for jobs	-assessment -completing application forms -new technology -skills sampling -labour-market information -interview skills	-modular -full and part-time -training methods to include open learning where appropriate -training lasts on average 10-15 days dependent on individual need
BRIDGE (counselling course for managers)	-managers and executives who may be registered with PER	-assessment -project work -job search base -new technology -labour-market information -interview skills	-modular -part-time only -training methods to include open learning where appropriate -trainees normally attend one or two days per week, according to individual need, for about 4 months
PREPARATORY LITERACY/ NUMERACY	-people needing training with a focus on work-related literacy and numeracy	-assessment -literacy/numeracy -new technology -self-employment -job rehearsals -skills sampling -short skills modules -labour-market information -interveiw skills	-modular -full and part-time -classroom and practical sessions -training methods to include open learning where appropriate -trainees normally accepted initially for up to 13 weeks, although extensions are possible; overall, most trainees stay (depending on individual need) about 6 weeks

COURSE PLANNING CATEGORY	*EXAMPLE TARGET POPULATION*	*CONTENT RANGE*	*EXAMPLE COURSE STRUCTURE*
PREPARATORY ESL (English as a Second Language)	–people for whom English is not their native language, e.g. immigrants and refugees, needing training with a focus on work-related language, together with other occupationally relevant skills	–assessment –ESL, literacy/numeracy –new technology –self-employment –job rehearsals –skills sampling –short skills modules –labour-market information –interview skills	–trainees normally accepted for up to 26 weeks, although extensions are possible; most trainees stay about 15-22 weeks –modular –full and part-time –classroom and practical sessions –training methods should include open learning where appropriate
SKILLS-LINKED ESL (English as a Second Language)	–people for whom English is not their native language, e.g. immigrants and refugees needing training with a focus on occupationally relevant skills, together with ESL		–trainees normally accepted initially for up to 20 weeks, although extensions are possible; most trainees stay about 6-18 weeks
WORK-RELATED SKILLS AND ASSESSMENT (WRSA)	–very flexible category of provision –courses can be set up to help a wide range of unemployed trainees or be specifically geared to the needs of certain groups (e.g. long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities, inner-city dwellers, recently redundant workers, people with obsolescent skills)	–assessment –new technology –self-employment –job rehearsals –skills sampling –short skills modules –support in literacy/numeracy or language –labour-market information –interview skills	–modular –full and part-time including drop-in/open access or a combination of these –average length of stay about 30-50 days –support can be intensive or spread over a period –training methods to include open learning where appropriate
WOMEN-ONLY COURSES (Wider Opportunities for Women Courses)	–women who have been out of the labour market for a minimum of 2 years due to domestic responsibilities, and who have made a positive decision to return to work	–assessment –new technology –skills sampling –short skills modules –labour-market information –interview skills	–modular –full and part-time –average length of stay about 30 days –training methods to include open learning where appropriate

Particularly in relation to literacy/numeracy and ESL courses, it is MSC policy to link with local-authority-funded provision wherever possible.

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